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Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-96-028 9 February 1996

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Islamic Affairs

Political Islam Review: 'AQIDATI 30 Jan

NC0702132596

[FBIS Report] The following is a comprehensive review of all items in the 30 January edition of the Arabic language newspaper 'AQIDATI that pertain to political Islamic issues.

CONTENTS:

1. Government Has Right to Organize al-Hisbah Law
2. Separation Between Religion, State Rejected
3. Egypt Won October War Under 'God Is Great' Banner
4. Mufti Interviewed on Shari'ah, Death Sentences, Arts
5. Islamic Reconciliation Urged
6. Speakers Cited Addressing Islamic Thought Forum
7. Better Religious TV Programs Urged to Prevent Deviation

GOVERNMENT HAS RIGHT TO ORGANIZE AL-HISBAH LAW

A 1,500-word report by Tariq 'Abdallah and Mahmud 'Ushb on page 3 cites the Mufti of the republic and other ulema as maintaining that the government has the right to organize the practice of al-Hisbah to prevent chaos in society. Under the Islamic system of al-Hisbah, any Muslim can sue another if he believes the latter's acts or works violate the Islamic shari'ah and encourage vice in society, even if the suitor has no personal interest in the case. Based on this practice, Islamists in the past few years filed lawsuits against a number of writers, authors, and artists accusing them of apostacy or of harming Islam in their literary or artistic works. This drew angry protests and reactions from intellectuals and others, who demanded that the al-Hisbah system be abolished. On 29 January, the People's Assembly passed a draft law organizing the practice of al- Hisbah. Under the new bill, which later became a law, people cannot go directly to court to file cases based on al-Hisbah. They should go to the public prosecution to report the violation and present evidence and documents, and the prosecution will have the exclusive right to decide whether to take legal action or to reject the case.

The Mufti of the republic, Dr. Muhammad Sayyid Tantawi, maintains that al-Hisbah is not a duty for every single Muslim. He says there is nothing religiously wrong in reporting shari'ah violations to the public prosecution, which in turn will take the case to court. This is because "the public prosecution is the side entrusted to ensure legal protection and to safeguard society's interests and security." Tantawi, however, finds no religious basis for giving the public prosecution exclusive right to file al-Hisbah cases. He says this is a right of every sane, sincere, mature, and straightforward Muslim.

The Mufti argues that the al-Hisbah system finds its roots in the Islamic shari'ah because, in essence, it is based on the Islamic principle of promoting virtue and suppressing vice. He says: "As long as cases based on al-Hisbah, which is a religious right of individuals and groups, find their legitimate way to the judiciary without any injustice or oppression, there is no religious objection to presenting them to the prosecution first. This is an organizational matter acceptable to the Islamic shari'ah."

Dr. Muhammad Ra'fat 'Uthman, dean of the Shari'ah College in Tanta, agrees that promoting virtue and suppressing vice is a right and religious duty of every Muslim. Practicing this right, he says, reduces crimes and shari'ah violations. But if this right is abused, he says, then it is the state's right to interfere. "It is the ruler's right to prevent people from encroaching upon others, provided that the principle remains unchanged and that the organization does not upset the religious right, indeed duty, of every Muslim to promote virtue and suppress vice." He reviews some articles of the new law, contending that they do not violate the Islamic shari'ah.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid Matlub, head of the Islamic Shari'ah Department at 'Ayn Shams university supports the new law "because it prevents chaos, which has resulted in hurting many people."

—In his 400-word column on page 1, Samir Rajab, the newspaper's board chairman, praises the government for drafting a new law for al-Hisbah. He says the government had to do that "after the extremists used new methods to undermine society and incite people against one another." He says the government was careful to base the new law on the Islamic shari'ah and on Egyptian traditions and ethics. He says the law seeks to confront terrorism in all its forms. Rajab asks: "Has the time come for the advocates, planners, and perpetrators of terrorism to realize that they have no place in the land of Egypt, no matter what pressure they apply to threaten peaceful people inside and outside their homes?"

—The paper publishes on page 3 the 350-word "text" of the new law on al-Hisbah cases.

SEPARATION BETWEEN RELIGION, STATE REJECTED

A 350-word report by Musa Hal on page 2 cites al-Azhar Grand Imam Jad-al-Haqq 'Ali Jad-al-Haqq as

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telling new graduate preachers from several Islamic countries that "secularists have no place among Muslims in any Islamic country." Those who think that Islam is only a matter of worship and has nothing to do with earthly affairs are mistaken, he says, adding that "Islam rules man everywhere and at all times." He urges preachers to serve as models and to work to promote virtue and suppress vice in their societies.

EGYPT WON OCTOBER WAR UNDER 'GOD IS GREAT' BANNER

In an 800-word article on page 7, al-Azhar Grand Imam Jad-al-Haqq 'Ali Jad-al-Haqq discusses the 10 Ramadan [6 October] 1973 war on the occasion of its 23d anniversary. He maintains that the Egyptian Army won the battle under the "God is Great" banner. He says God grants victory to those who obey him and uphold faith. He urges people to thank God so that victory can be perpetuated. The way to thank God, he says, is to obey him and follow his shari'ah.

---In a 350-word article on the same subject on page 23, Ibrahim Nasr also stresses "the high spirit of faith" that characterizes the Egyptian soldiers during the war, which helped achieve victory. He says God never lets down those who support his cause, and he urges showing thanks to God by following the Islamic shari'ah. The writer says God granted Egypt an even greater victory through the peace that was concluded with Israel later, "the peace that many people could not comprehend at the time. But those people accepted this peace later, after they failed to achieve anything without it."

MUFTI INTERVIEWED ON SHARI'AH, DEATH SENTENCES, ARTS

Pages 8 and 9 feature a 4,000-word interview with the mufti of Egypt, Dr. Muhammad Sayyid Tantawi, in which he answers readers' questions as conveyed to him by reporters Majdi Salim, Ibrahim Nasr, and Mahmud 'Ushb. Asked whether he has a clear conscience when he ratifies death sentences passed by the courts, he says he reads the papers referred to him by the court and forwards a report to judicial bodies on whether a convict deserves death or not. He says he bases his fatwa (religious edict) on certain criteria, like a convict's confession to murder or the presence of strong evidence against him. He says he writes his report "based on the papers in the case before me, and I make my judgment as dictated by my religion and conscience." He says he approves of the death penalty against drug traffickers in order to protect the nation.

Asked why the majority of his fatwas and opinions are usually "loose," not "as decisive as the Islamic shari'ah," the mufti angrily denies the claim. This is "nonsense," he says, and "a lie." I do not sanction something if it is religiously prohibited or deem something to be religiously forbidden if it is not, he says.

The mufti says Islam welcomes every work of art that promotes ethics and decency and rejects art that calls for indecency or harms society's ethics and traditions. Asked why the hudud (penal code based on the Islamic shari'ah) is not fully enforced, Tantawi says: "This concerns the legislative bodies; they are the ones that can do this. They can lay down the laws under which God's shari'ah can be fully applied. I have been calling for the application of shari'ah and hudud since I assumed the post of mufti. I am calling for the enforcement of the hudud for theft, adultery, and the drinking of alcohol. I stress that the application of the hudud is the legislative bodies' responsibility."

ISLAMIC RECONCILIATION URGED

In a 300-word article on page 20, Columnist 'Adil Dayf urges Islamic reconciliation on this holy month of Ramadan. He laments the fact that Muslims "are killing each other and giving their enemies a chance to tamper with and interfere in their affairs." He urges an end to the media war among Muslim countries and calls on them to sit together to solve their problems away from foreign interference.

SPEAKERS CITED ADDRESSING ISLAMIC THOUGHT FORUM

Muhammad al-Abnudi writes a 900-word report on page 10 about a seminar by the Islamic Thought Forum. Addressing the seminar, Al-Azhar Shaykh Jad-al-Haqq 'Ali Jad-al-Haqq reportedly called on Muslim ulema to rise to the level of the challenges of the age and to work to solve the problems of the Islamic world. He urged them to engage in dialogues with the people and to correct wrong ideas about Islam. Other speakers urge adherence to the teachings of Islam and stress that Islam is a universal religion that knows no discrimination or prejudice.

BETTER RELIGIOUS TV PROGRAMS URGED TO PREVENT DEVIATION

In a 600-word article on page 6, columnist Basyuni al-Hulwani discusses religious programs on television, which he says are not up to the required level. Noting that the religious programs discuss "futile issues that are out of touch with peoples' lives," he says the programs have lost their influence and popularity and no longer achieve their purpose. He notes the importance of good religious programs at this stage, "when the advocates of violence and mental and psychological diseases are

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assuming the mantle of Islam to achieve their objectives, which are far removed from the religion's essence and sublime goals." Contending that "all forms of deviation and social, educational, and ethical disturbances in our country were a result of our moving away from the values, principles, and ethics of Islam," the writer says that "there is no alternative to presenting true Islam to our youths and children; this is the best way to prevent their deviation."

Political Islam Review: AL-SHA'B 30 Jan

NC0702110796

[FBIS Report] The following is a comprehensive review of all items in the 30 January edition of the Arabic language newspaper AL-SHA'B that pertain to political Islamic issues.

CONTENTS:

1. Lawyers Association Official Deplores Sequestration Order
2. Varying Egyptian Stances on Sudan Reported
3. Libya Urges Egypt Not To Seek Anti-Sudan UN Resolution
4. Report on Casualty Toll of Clashes With Islamists
5. Labor Party Leader Criticizes Government's Policy Statement
6. Chief Editor Urges Strategic Alliance With Red Sea Countries
7. Muslim Scholar Discusses Stance on Islamic al-Hisbah Law
8. Labor Party Official Views Investment Policy, Criticizes IMF
9. Writer Advocates Islamic al-Hisbah Law
10. Mustafa Mashhur Defends Muslim Brothers
11. Commentary Laments Muslims' Situation
12. Columnist Assails Government's Policy on Islamists

LAWYERS ASSOCIATION OFFICIAL DEPLORES SEQUESTRATION ORDER

A 400-word, front page report filed by Khalid Yunus says that a Cairo court has sequestered the Lawyers Association. The report adds that the secretary general of the Lawyers Association "has expressed displeasure and deep regret. In statements to AL-SHA'B, he says sequestration cannot be imposed on trade unions, especially the Lawyers Association. He adds that its is a regrettable act that will remain "a mark of disgrace on those who sought to impose it."

VARYING EGYPTIAN STANCES ON SUDAN REPORTED

An 860-word report on pages 1 and 8 compiled by Muhammad Jamal 'Arafah and Rabi' Shahin discusses "expected" Security Council economic sanctions on Sudan "with direct support from Britain and the United States."

The report says: "AL-SHA'B has learned that divisions occurred within Egyptian official agencies over how to handle the crisis. Political institutions insist on handling and settling the crisis politically and say that sanctions limited to political pressure on Sudan and a warning to scale down ties with it should be enough. The official media and security agencies lead hardliners who demand the overthrow of the Sudanese regime."

The report asserts that Washington advised Egypt to continue its tough stance against Sudan and that the U.S. Administration proposed coordinating with and backing the Sudanese opposition "to overthrow the al-Bashir-led Islamic Front regime."

The report says that AL-SHA'B has learned that Washington's proposals conveyed by U.S. envoys who visited Cairo recently were rejected, "especially by the Egyptian Foreign Ministry." The Foreign Ministry, the report adds, believes that political and legal sanctions and pressure on Sudan to hand over the suspects should be enough.

The report notes that Egyptian Foreign Minister Musa met the U.S. envoy to the United Nations and the U.S. ambassador in Cairo and that the talks focused mainly on Sudan. Musa, the report adds, "rejected any attempts to infringe Sudan's land and unity and emphasized to the U.S. officials that any dispute should be confined to politics and law without escalation."

LIBYA URGES EGYPT NOT TO SEEK ANTI-SUDAN UN RESOLUTION

A 350-word, front-page report filed by Mahmud Bakri says "Libya has urged Egypt not to seek a Security Council resolution against Sudan." It adds that in a telephone call to President Mubarak, Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi asked that he be given "a full opportunity to settle the Egyptian-Sudanese dispute." The report also says that the Libyan leader stressed that "any attempt to harm Sudan at the Security Council will have a direct impact on Egyptian and Libyan security."

REPORT ON CASUALTY TOLL OF CLASHES WITH ISLAMISTS

A 550-word report on the first page by Mu'tazz al-Hadidi cites "official Interior Ministry reports" on the casualty toll from clashes with Islamic groups. The report says that 460 officers, men, and sentries have been "martyred" or wounded during clashes with Islamic groups. The report says that clashes from 1992 until the end of 1995 left 209 people dead and 251 wounded.

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LABOR PARTY LEADER CRITICIZES GOVERNMENT'S POLICY STATEMENT

In a 1,000-word article on pages 1 and 8, Labor Party Leader Ibrahim Shukri criticizes the government's policy statement delivered by the prime minister at the People's Assembly. He particularly notes that Prime Minister al-Janzuri "completely ignored" the recent People's Assembly elections. Discussing investment and development, Shukri says things cannot be right unless the people feel they are participating in the decisionmaking process and have the right to choose their representatives at the People's Assembly.

CHIEF EDITOR URGES STRATEGIC ALLIANCE WITH RED SEA COUNTRIES

In an approximately 3,900-word article on page 2, AL-SHA'B's chief editor, Majdi Ahmad Husayn, reviews the Red Sea's historical and strategic importance for Egypt.

Discussing the role Egypt should play in the Red Sea, he says Egypt should consolidate a strategic alliance with all the Arab and Islamic countries around the Red Sea. Egypt, he adds, should strengthen the Egyptian naval force to back this alliance in cooperation with Arab navies. He adds that if Israel adopts long-term plans for its security, Egypt should also be concerned to protect its national security and defend the "frontlines of that security."

MUSLIM SCHOLAR DISCUSSES STANCE ON ISLAMIC AL-HISBAH LAW

Page 3 features a 3,500-word report filed by Dr. Rif'at Sayyid Ahmad on controversial draft legislation organizing the Islamic al-Hisbah law, which has been ratified by parliament. [Under the al-Hisbah law, any Muslim can sue other Muslims or Muslim groups for violating Islamic shari'ah, even if such cases are of no personal interest to the person filing the suit.] A Muslim scholar who advocates the al-Hisbah law, Shaykh Yusuf al-Badri, is asked to comment on "a media campaign against him about this law. He answers by saying that this campaign was launched by writers "to appease the government and to pave the way for striking off another Islamic law."

Asked how he specifically interprets the campaign against him by AKHBAR AL-YAWM and AL-MUSAWWAR, he says: "They wanted to use me for other goals they seek to achieve—to push through new legislation on al-Hisbah. But I promise them they will not escape justice, because they distorted my words."

LABOR PARTY OFFICIAL VIEWS INVESTMENT POLICY, CRITICIZES IMF

Labor Party Secretary General 'Adil Husayn writes an approximately 4,700-word article on page 4 criticizing the government's policy on investment and economy. He says: "Opening the investment door to foreigners and Zionists without any state control or directives asserts these people's direct control over a growing sector of our economy. The law on leasing paves the way for controlling Egyptian private sector projects."

Under the subtitle "Nationalists and Economists, Reject the IMF Program," he asks: "What is being hatched for Egypt? He says: "I call on the nationalist forces and our economists to confront this plot, which liquidates all we have achieved with our blood to liberate our country from the grip of colonialism. The arrogant powers' return to control our economy and plunder our resources frustrates every hope of development and of building a strong and prosperous Arab and Islamic nation." He adds: "The enemies' plots must not be confronted individually. We must uncover and reject hostile conspiracies together by providing the Islamic and nationalist alternative. We will be unable to do that unless we free ourselves from the illusion that international organizations, especially the Anglo-American axis in them, represent a credible economic science."

Elsewhere in the article, he says: "We in Egypt and the Arab-Islamic region have self-confidence in opposing the others. We have the resolve to challenge their injustice and weak knowledge based on our faith in God's law on economic organization and the Islamic approach to the economic system."

WRITER ADVOCATES ISLAMIC AL-HISBAH LAW

In a 3,600-word article on page 5, Dr. Muhammad Hilmi Murad defends the Islamic al-Hisbah law. He asks: "Can the al-Hisbah law be annulled in a country the Constitution of which stipulates that Islam is the religion of the state and that Islamic shari'ah's principles are the main source of legislation?

He says the public prosecution does not enjoy "complete independence" qualifying it to deal with the al-Hisbah law, because it is under the justice minister, "who is a member of the ruling executive authority."

MUSTAFA MASHHUR DEFENDS MUSLIM BROTHERS

In his regular column on page 5, Mustafa Mashhur, who is now the Muslim Brothers general guide, criticizes the

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authorities' campaign against the Brothers and defends their policies.

In his 1,600-word column, Mashhur says that some newspapers, backed by the authorities, portray the Brothers as an opposition political party adopting violence and terrorism and graduating terrorist groups that seek to come to power by force. He adds that the Brothers have "refuted these charges and proved them false." But, he continues, the authorities insist on them "to justify their oppression of the Brothers on the grounds that they represent a growing trend competing for power."

He then defends the Brothers' policies, citing writings of the movement's founder, al-Banna. He says: "This is the true image of the Muslim Brothers based on the words of the Brothers' founder. We accept no thinking or conduct violating Islam or Islamic policy, just as we rejected thinking of repudiation and violence. We should be accused of nothing of the kind."

He adds: "No member of the Brothers participated in any of the incidents that occurred. We adhere to the Constitution and regard constitutional rule as the closest to Islam, as Imam al-Banna said in the fifth conference message. The Constitution stipulates that the State's official religion is Islam and that Islamic shari'ah is the main source of legislation and laws. We demand the application of the Constitution. So how can we be accused of seeking to wreck or change the Constitution?"

He says: "When we raise the slogan of Islam is the Solution there is nothing in it that should provoke the rulers and prompt them to reject it."

Toward the end, he says: "We assert to everyone that we will tread the same path without change using our moderate policy and advocating the cause of God with wisdom and good advice free from violence."

COMMENTARY LAMENTS MUSLIMS' SITUATION

AL-SHA'B's page 7 runs a 580-word commentary written by Muhyi-al-Din Salih who deplores the Muslim's situation. He says: "Anyone who reviews developments in our region will be stunned. But if anyone looks at the stands of the rulers, he will be frustrated and despondent. I am saying these words as an Arab who is still entertaining a worn-out illusion that the borders of his homeland extend from the [Atlantic] Ocean to the [Arab] Gulf.

He adds that "colonialism" demarcated the countries' borders, that French laws were introduced "restricting the Muslims' movement within the Islamic countries," and then plots were hatched for the Muslims over "these imaginary borders." He continues: "We fought over these borders brushing aside God's immortal law that made us inherit the earth, the entire earth. Then a cherished part of our land was sliced off as a gift for the Jews. We agreed and acknowledged that and we even congratulated the Jews."

He says: "If the arrogant powers are expected to curtail our movement whenever possible, what is painful is that Islamic countries should complicate Muslims' movement just because there are differences between rulers here and there."

He adds that after ties with Iraq were severed and a blockade was imposed on Libya, the Muslims are in "deep slumber and have surrendered to all this. He notes that the tide is turning now against Sudan and warns "the weak-hearted and supporters of colonialism" against that move.

COLUMNIST ASSAILS GOVERNMENT'S POLICY ON ISLAMISTS

In a 450-word column on page 12, the writer, Muhammad 'Abd-al-Quddus, criticizes President Mubarak's police day speech on religion and terrorism and assails the government's policy on Islamists.

He says: "In his recent police day speech, President Mubarak said that religiousness does not justify betrayal of the country, striking its interests, and terrifying society."

'Abd-al-Quddus adds: "I have to scrutinize his words. The one who is charged with all these hideous crimes, such as betraying the country and terrifying society, cannot be truly religious. Therefore, I believe that the word religiousness was forced into the issue without reason. In turn, I ask our president: Does the war against terrorism justify oppressing religiousness entirely?

He says: "Since he assumed his third term in office, the president loosened the rein on suppressing freedoms and that the police rule's brutality focused on the Islamic trend itself. He adds that this campaign escalated after the failed and "rejected" attempt to assassinate the president in Addis Ababa last summer.

He says that a group of elite Egyptian men are currently in jail and that most of them are doctors, engineers, and university professors who completely reject terrorism. There has been no proof that they took up arms or supported violence, but the charge against them is that they worked to revive the Muslim Brothers group. This, he notes, is "truly an awkward charge because the group does exist, is not dead, and therefore, does not need to be revived."

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Political Islam Review: AL-SHA'B 2 Feb

NC0802104896

[FBIS Report] The following is a comprehensive review of all items in the 2 February edition of the Arabic language newspaper AL-SHA'B that pertain to political Islamic issues.

CONTENTS:

1. Chief Editor Majdi Husayn Given One-Year Jail Sentence
2. Lawyers Association Acts To Stop Sequestration Order
3. Report Criticizes UN Security Council Resolution on Sudan
4. Chief Editor Enumerates Shortcomings of Military Tribunals
5. Brotherhood Leader Mashhur Addresses Rally on October War Anniversary
6. Writer Discusses UN Security Council Resolution on Sudan
7. U.S. Said Afraid of Muslim Mujahidin in Bosnia

CHIEF EDITOR MAJDI HUSAYN GIVEN ONE-YEAR JAIL SENTENCE

On page 1 the newspaper publishes several reports on the decision by the Bulaq Criminal Court to sentence AL-SHA'B's chief editor, Majdi Ahmad Husayn, to one year in prison and to pay a fine of 15,000 Egyptian pounds in a case of libel brought by 'Ala', the son of Interior Minister Hasan al-Alfi. The newspaper says the Bulaq Appeal Court will examine an appeal by AL-SHA'B's defense on 19 March after payment of a 200-pound bond to stop the sentence being carried out.

A 100-word unattributed report cites a BBC comment on the jail sentence for AL-SHA'B's chief editor. The BBC is quoted saying that AL-SHA'B is considered a "thorn in the side of the Egyptian regime" because it has exposed "corruption in the upper echelons" and because of its Islamic orientation. The BBC reportedly says that AL-SHA'B did not mention 'Ala' al-Alfi by name in a report last year headlined "The Thuggery of the Son of a High-Ranking Official." But 'Ala' al-Alfi insisted on suing Majdi Husayn for libel. Another unattributed 100-word report says the International Committee in Defense of Journalists' Rights has denounced the sentence, saying Majdi Husayn was convicted simply because he exercised his right as a journalist to publish news and ideas, a right guaranteed by Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

In an apparent dig at Interior Minister Hasan al-Alfi, the newspaper reports without comment that his other son, 'Adil, bought a store in the Cairo suburb of Heliopolis for 2.15 million Egyptian pounds. The newspaper congratulates 'Adil on the purchase.

LAWYERS ASSOCIATION ACTS TO STOP SEQUESTRATION ORDER

A 300-word report by Khalid Yunus and Dawud Hasan on page 1 says the Lawyers Association Council is continuing its moves, consultations, and contacts to stop a Cairo court's sequestration order against the Lawyers Association. The court also appointed three judicial administrators to run the council, including the current association chairman, Ahmad al-Khawajah. The council has submitted several memorandums to the Cairo Court of Urgent Matters, contesting the sequestration order, saying it "violates the Constitution," which stipulates that trade unions and associations are established on a democratic basis and cannot be dissolved or robbed of their authority except through free elections to elect new councils. The report cites as a precedent a Constitutional Court judgment in 1983 ruling that late President Anwar al-Sadat's decision to dissolve the Lawyers Association Council at that time was "unconstitutional."

On page 2, the newspaper publishes a 1,000-word interview with Mukhtar Nuh, treasurer of the Lawyers Association. In the interview, conducted by Khalid Yunus, Nuh denies that there have been "financial irregularities" at the association and says the government is treating the trade unions and associations as commercial firms and grocery stores to impose its will on them.

REPORT CRITICIZES UN SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION ON SUDAN

On page 1 the newspaper publishes a 300-word unattributed report entitled "Security Council Accuses Sudan of Responsibility for Terrorism Worldwide." Although mostly factual, the report describes the UN Security Council resolution as an "attempt at political assassination." The report adds that the resolution will lead to "further tension" in Egyptian-Sudanese relations because Sudan accuses Egypt of trying to "settle accounts" with it through the council.

CHIEF EDITOR ENUMERATES SHORTCOMINGS OF MILITARY TRIBUNALS

In a 1,000-word article on page 2, Chief Editor Majdi Ahmad Husayn publishes the last part of a tract entitled "The Ten Sins of the Military Tribunals from the viewpoint of Islamic Shari'ah." He lists 10 "irregularities" committed by the military tribunals, which can be paraphrased as follows:

1. The military tribunals have ignored the principle that a defendant should not be punished on the basis of mere suspicion.

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2. The military tribunals have not adhered to the Koran's rules on halal and haram [what is lawful and what is forbidden].

3. The military tribunals have ignored the principle that sentences can be appealed.

4. The military tribunals have ignored the principle of the independence of the courts.

5. The military tribunals have ignored the principle of the Koranic punishment, which calls for an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.

6. The military tribunals have ignored the principle of a pardon.

7. The military tribunals have ignored the principle of blood money.

8. The military tribunals have ignored the principle that punishments for offenses are not limited to death sentences.

9. The military tribunals have ignored the principle that attempted murder is not punishable by death.

10. The military tribunals have put accomplices in a crime on a par with the real perpetrators.

BROTHERHOOD LEADER MUSTAFA MASHHUR ADDRESSES RALLY ON OCTOBER WAR ANNIVERSARY

On page 4 the newspaper publishes a 1,000-word report by Tariq 'Abd-al-Hamid on a ceremony held by the Labor Party on the anniversary of the 10 Ramadan [6 October 1973] war. Labor Party leader Ibrahim Shukri; Mustafa Mashhur, general guide of the Muslim Brotherhood; and Lieutenant General Sa'd-al-Din al-Shadhili, Egyptian chief of staff during the October 1973 war, attended.

Addressing the rally, Shukri said the October war was a military achievement by all standards, such that the United States opened NATO arsenals to rescue Israel from annihilation. He laments the emergency laws having been in force for 15 years, saying that a country under emergency laws cannot live a normal life and cannot attract foreign investment.

Brotherhood leader Mustafa Mashhur says there is a sharp struggle between "righteous people" and "unrighteous people." The latter consider Islam their greatest enemy and they include the Jews, Russians, Serbs, and Hindus. He adds that the call of Islam "will not die" and that the struggle between right and wrong will be settled in favor of Islam. He says this struggle should not be measured by the "material factor" alone because the "divine factor" is also important. He notes that after the downfall of the Islamic caliphate in Turkey, Imam Hasan al-Banna founded the Brotherhood movement to establish the "state of Islam." You cannot measure how long it takes to achieve this goal because it takes time to be achieved. Communism survived 70 years and then collapsed because it contained the seeds of collapse. For 100 years the "Zionist enemy" has been trying to establish its greater state from the Nile to the Euphrates. Now we find he feels he is unsafe in the land he "usurped" in Palestine. He asserts that the "state of Islam" will be established in time. Mashhur says the Jews are the worst enemies and that the Palestinian issue is the issue of all Muslims. The current peace agreements with Israel are only "capitulationist" agreements. He maintains that "ordeals" do not weaken the Islamic movements, but strengthen them, and that the Brotherhood will continue its "moderate" policy and avoid violence and breaking the law. The Brotherhood works through legal channels in the various professional associations.

WRITER DISCUSSES UN SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION ON SUDAN

On page 5, Labor Party Secretary General 'Adil Husayn writes a 3,500-word article on the 6 October 1973 War, also known in Egypt and the Arab world as the 10 Ramadan War. He reviews events from 1951 to 1973 and says the Ramadan War liberated Arab oil from foreign control. Toward the end of the article, he notes that the "United States is preparing for something right now." He adds that "there has been an unusual increase in U.S. troop buildup in the past three months." He asks: "What are they preparing?" And says: "What is being prepared for Sudan is known." But, he asks, what about other Arab countries? Commenting on the UN Security Council resolution issued on 31 January denouncing Sudan for sponsoring terrorism, 'Adil Husayn says the Security Council decided to punish the Sudanese Government and then began looking for any reason to justify the resolution. The same thing happened to Libya on the pretext that it was involved in bombing a Pan-American plane over Lockerbie. The same thing happened to Iraq although it fulfilled all its obligations. But the UN embargo against Libya and Iraq continues. He asks: "Why has the Egyptian Government involved itself in supporting this unfair resolution." He suggests that "Anglo-American-Israeli plotting against Sudan is old." It did not start with the coming to power of the Islamic Salvation Revolution and it will not end with this resolution by the Security Council. The "plotting" does not aim to overthrow the al-Bashir regime, but aims to eliminate and "dismember" Sudan as a state. 'Adil Husayn says it is no "crime" for Sudan to declare its adherence to Islamic shari'ah and it is no "crime" for Sudan to declare its opposition to the "U.S.-Israeli

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plans" in the region. But it is a "crime for our rulers to approve UN intervention in Sudan." "This stance conflicts with all our principles on the basis of which the Ramadan War was launched," he adds.

U.S. SAID AFRAID OF MUSLIM MUHAJIDIN IN BOSNIA

On page 7 the newspaper publishes a 300-word unattributed column entitled the "Bugbear of the Bosnia Mujahidin." The column says that the U.S. State Department has launched a "terrorist campaign" against the Bosnian Government and exercised intensive pressure to evacuate the Muslim mujahidin from Bosnia, such that the U.S. State Department has threatened to suspend U.S. aid to Bosnia and to stop the program for training and equipping the Bosnian Army. The column says the United States is concentrating on the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, 200 of whom remain in Bosnia. The column concludes that the U.S. warning against the "bugbear" of the mujahidin in Bosnia is an attempt to sever any link between the Muslims of Bosnia and the Islamic world, reassimilate the Bosnians in Europe, indoctrinate them with European concepts, and distance them from the teachings of Islam, to which they returned during the war years.

Political Islam Review: 'AQIDATI 6 Feb

NC0902121196

[FBIS Report] The following is a comprehensive review of all items in the 6 February edition of the Arabic language newspaper 'AQIDATI that pertain to political Islamic issues.

CONTENTS:

1. Al-Azhar Imam Says Jerusalem Is Muslims' Cause
2. Seminar Held on Islam's Role in Civilization
3. Editorial Says Fighting Lies About Islam Is a Duty
4. Writer Urges Muslims To Solve Their Problems
5. Report on Israeli Measures To Judaize Jerusalem

AL-AZHAR IMAM SAYS JERUSALEM IS MUSLIMS' CAUSE

An 80-word unattributed report on page 1 quotes al-Azhar Imam Shaykh Jad-al-Haqq 'Ali Jad-al-Haqq as praising Egypt's stand on the Jerusalem issue and rejecting the Israeli claims to the city as its capital. He says that these claims are meant to provoke Muslims, specially during the month of Ramadan, and asserts that the Jerusalem issue will remain the Muslims' cause until it becomes the Palestinians' capital. He urges Muslims to unite and the international community to achieve a just peace between the Arabs and Israel.

SEMINAR HELD ON ISLAM'S ROLE IN CIVILIZATION

A 350-word report written by Muhammad al-Abnudi on page 2 details the proceedings of a seminar on Islamic thinking organized by the presidential office, al-Azhar, and the ministry of awqaf. It says that the speakers pointed out Islam's prominent role in human civilization and progress. Al-Azhar teacher Dr. Ibrahim al-'Adawi is cited as saying that "compliance with our Islamic values and principles are the noblest definition of progress." After speaking about the dawn of Islam, Dr. Ahmad Shalabi, teacher of Islamic history at Cairo University, urges Muslims not to forget their defeats "because we can learn from them our weak points and imbalances and overcome them." For his part, Dr. Muhammad 'Amarah speaks about the Koran's role in man's life, stressing that the "more the Muslim nation stays committed to the Koran the more it can confront the challenges it is facing at this period of history, which is but a series of challenges."

EDITORIAL SAYS FIGHTING LIES ABOUT ISLAM IS A DUTY

A 300-word editorial on page 3 recalls the glory of the Badr battle, the first battle fought by the nascent Islam, and how it changed the history of the world and also recalls the victory of the 10 Ramadan war [6 October 1973]. After stressing that the Badr battle has remained a living lesson throughout the ages, the editorial adds: " The vicious war facing Islam today, which wants to distort its image and make it repellent, is no less dangerous than the former battles which tried to nip it in the bud and eliminate it when it appeared in Mecca. It is our duty, we Muslims of this day, to fight these modern battles by setting a good example and presenting the correct image of our religion's teachings first and by refuting these claims, lies, and accusations which those full of hatred and personal agendas are trying to pin on Islam."

WRITER URGES MUSLIMS TO SOLVE THEIR PROBLEMS

In his 140-word column "Islamic Solutions" on page 20, writer 'Adil Dayf laments the fact that the holy month of Ramadan comes year after year with the Muslims' problems remaining unsolved. He says that Muslims are not learning the lessons of history and "do not want to understand that their strength lies in their unity and their weakness causes fragmentation." He notes that not a single country has taken an initiative to solve a problem with its neighbors during Ramadan. He appeals to Muslims to lay down arms and reach understanding

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with each other and to the Muslim countries to aid Muslims struggling in Palestine, Chechnya, and Bosnia.

REPORT ON ISRAELI MEASURES TO JUDAIZE JERUSALEM

A 3,000-word report on pages 20 and 21 by 'Adil 'Abd-al-Hamid and Muhammad Muhammadayn deals with Israeli measures to Judaize the Arab city of Jerusalem. The report starts with remarks by Shaykh 'Akramah Sabri, the Mufti of Jerusalem, who asserts that the Judaization measures are continuing and these include the expropriation of Muslims' land, the building of settlements, and the establishment of Jewish housing quarters within the walls of the old city. He also notes that the Jews' attempts to take over al-Aqsa Mosque never cease and appeals to all Muslims to help the local Muslims face this danger. He then asserts that the Muslims are confronting the excavations being done under the mosque and urges Muslims in Palestinian territories to pray constantly in the mosque. The report then seeks the views of several persons on these Judaization measures. Only the initials of those interviewed are given in the report. Among the Israeli measures they cite are the expulsion of Arab residents from the city's old quarters, the offer of huge amounts of money to buy Arab lands and buildings, the imposition of very high municipal taxes, the use of extremists to attack the Arabs, the imposition of high income taxes on residents, the Judaization of the educational system, and running down Arab-managed medical care centers in favor of Israeli ones. The measures also include granting Israeli citizenship to Arab residents. The report notes that "around 13,000 Palestinians have taken this citizenship, that is around 6.5 percent of the total Arab population of the city." Against these measures, those interviewed spoke of punishment dealt out to those who sold their houses to Jews and an increase of enrollment in Muslim schools.

Palestinian Affairs

Palestinian Affairs: PLO Executive Secretary on Date, Venue for Meetings

TA0902115596 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 9 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Jamal al-Surani, secretary of the PLO Executive Committee, said that the Palestinian Authority's elected council would hold its first meeting immediately after the month of Ramadan ends in 10 days. Two months later, the Palestine National Council will convene.

Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that the Palestinians have promised to pass the amendments to the Palestinian Charter demanded by Israel no later than two months after the elected council's first session.

Al-Surani added that the PLO's Executive Committee had decided that from now on, its official headquarters would be in the Gaza Strip and that all its meetings would be held in the territories.

Palestinian Affairs: Hurani on Conditions for Amending National Charter

NC0802175496 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1410 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 8 Feb (MENA)—PLO Executive Committee Member 'Abdallah Hurani has stated that it would be difficult to amend the National Charter before reaching an agreement on the status of Jerusalem and recognizing it as the capital of the state of Palestine, solving all the issues of prisoners and refugees, and removing the settlers from the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In a statement published in the newspaper AL-AHRAM AL-MASA'I today, he says it is unfair and illogical to amend the Charter while there are thousands of displaced persons and deportees on the Egyptian-Libyan border whom Israel is preventing from entering the self-rule areas.

Hurani said the Palestine National Council [PNC] cannot amend the Charter as Israel demands as long as there still are more than 6,000 Palestinians in Israeli prisons. Frankly speaking, Israel will not find any Palestinian in the PNC or the PLO Executive Committee who will accept or even agree to discuss amending the Charter until these issues are resolved. He described the PLO Executive Committee's decision at its recent meeting in al-'Arish to postpone amending the National Charter as natural, balanced, and appropriate, given the current circumstances. He noted that this decision was adopted after lengthy and heated discussion among the PLO Executive Committee members. There was almost unanimous refusal to amend the National Charter. He said: We thought it is wise to continue the dialogue with the Israeli side and to postpone a decision on this subject until Palestine obtains all its rights and the remaining parts of the Oslo accord and the Declaration of Principles are implemented.

In his interview with AL-AHRAM AL-MASA'I, Hurani says the PLO's demands are known to everyone in Israel. Under no circumstances will we agree to cut an election deal with Prime Minister Shim'on Peres to promote the Labor Party in the Israeli elections, which might start earlier than scheduled. He said if there is anyone in Israel who thinks that we might concede any of our rights as provided for in the National Charter, he is wrong, he is dreaming. We will not agree to help

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Peres or the members of his party unless we obtain our rights first.

On the PLO's requirements before the National Charter could be amended, Hurani said our conditions and demands are known. For example, we demand the return of all 640 PNC members who are now abroad, such as all the leaders of the Palestinian factions in Damascus and other Arab capitals. We demand that all these people be allowed to return as citizens with the right to permanent residence and not as visitors. There are scores of other demands that Israel knows about and on which no discussion or bargaining is needed.

Hurani said if the Israeli side continues to reject the Palestinian demands, it is unlikely the National Charter will be amended this year. The Palestinian stands calling for the restoration of all rights and the achievement of the goals mentioned in the Charter are firm.

Palestinian Affairs: Official Denies Qaddumi Floated Idea of New Charter

MM0802161096 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 8 Feb 96 p 3

[Unattributed report: "Palestinian Official: New PLO Charter Would Not Accommodate Old Charter, Which Concerns All People"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Tunis, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT — A Palestinian official has said in Tunis that the idea of issuing a new PLO Charter means that the new charter "would consume the National Charter and divide the people."

In a statement to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that official pointed out that any change in the Palestinian National Charter would alter the familiar shape of the charter. Besides, a new charter would not be able to accommodate the old charter, which concerns all Palestine and all the Palestinian people.

Responding to claims that a new charter would not revoke the old charter, the Palestinian official, who asked to remain anonymous, said that that is untrue and absolutely baseless. He added that "a new charter would revoke the previous one."

The Palestinian official told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT over the telephone that it is neither true nor accurate that the idea of issuing a new PLO Charter was extracted from the ideas mentioned in an interview given to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT recently by PLO Political Department Head Faruq Qaddumi.

It is worth mentioning that in this interview Qaddumi called for the retention of the present PLO Charter and for the preparation of a new constitution for the Palestinian government. He said: "Leave the present house as it is and build another house without other pillars."

The Palestinian official said that issuing a new PLO Charter and changing the provisions would mean abolishing the PLO, which was established on the basis of its current charter.

The official stressed that the question of issuing a new PLO Charter is still merely an idea raised for discussion on the Palestinian stage and among the Palestinian factions supportive of and opposed to the peace process. And the only quarter capable of settling this debate is the Palestine National Council, which has the powers to agree or reject. The Palestinian official believes that the idea of issuing a new charter is an attempt to avoid the confrontation expected to take place between those opposed to and those supporting the idea of abolishing the charter altogether, since the current charter is sacred to the Palestinians. Qaddumi said in his interview with AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that, if the Charter is abolished, it would be the final divorce between those supporting and those opposed to the Oslo agreement.

Palestinian Affairs: AL-QUDS Notes Conditions for Amending Charter

TA0802171796 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 7 Feb 96 p 13

[Editorial: "Israeli Steps Are Required Prior to Amending the Charter"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Undoubtedly, there are many issues which can be discussed — and were indeed discussed — at the PLO Executive Committee meeting in al-'Arish. The reason is that the exceptional circumstances which the Palestinian people and their cause are experiencing at this delicate stage of their history are, on one hand, the result of the many difficulties stemming from the continuation of the Israeli occupation for over a 28-year period and, on the other hand, from the commitments and problems of the Palestinian-Israeli Oslo accords.

Hence, the issue of amending the Palestinian National Charter is not the only issue preoccupying the Palestinians at present. There are many preoccupations, most important of which is reaching a just and final settlement of the issue of male and female prisoners in Israeli jails. To date, the Israeli side has persisted in circumventing the agreements reached with the Palestinians on this issue. Those agreements provided for the release of all the prisoners without any discrimination. While the Israeli side calls for amending the Palestinian Charter, it ignores a resolution of the prisoner issue in accordance with Palestinian demands.

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Amending the Charter has actually become the last political card in the hands of the Palestinian side. Consequently, the adoption of this step should be accompanied by definite Israeli commitments to recognize legitimate Palestinian rights, including the establishment of a Palestinian state, and the creation of a basic mechanism for solving the issues of Jerusalem, the settlements, the refugees, the displaced, and the final borders.

If the demand to amend the Palestinian National Charter is urgent for Israel, it should create the suitable climate for such a step, which is supposed to be the landmark for the beginning of a new era in which all Palestinian aspirations are realized, or in which binding Israeli commitments and pledges are provided for the realization of these aspirations. As for the threat to stop the talks, suspend the peace process, or halt the redeployment of Israeli forces outside the Palestinian areas, this will only have a negative impact on the credibility of the Israeli side and its notions of the Palestinian people's rights, which constitute the first and last pillar for a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

Palestinian Affairs: PNC Foreign Affairs Committee Chooses New Chairman

TA0702142396 Gaza AL-HAYAH AL-JADIDAH in Arabic 6 Feb 96 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman, QUDS PRESS — Informed Palestinian sources told QUDS PRESS that the Palestine National Council [PNC] foreign affairs and parliamentary committee yesterday chose 'Uthman Abu-Gharibah as its chairman. Khalid al-Hasan, a founding member of Fatah who died last year, was the former chairman of the committee.

Acting PNC speaker Salim al-Za'nun stated to QUDS PRESS that the selection of the committee's chairman "aims at activating its role under the current conditions, especially in view of the approaching final settlement talks and in order to secure the maximum support for legitimate Palestinian rights."

Palestinian Affairs: Israel Told To Stop Confiscating, Bulldozing Land

JN0802181296 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Ministry of Information has demanded that the Israeli Government immediately stop confiscating and bulldozing Palestinian territories and that it expedite final solution negotiations. A statement issued by the Ministry of Information today says that the acts of bulldozing and confiscation are unilateral acts of war, which aim at fragmenting Palestinian geographic integrity. The statement warns against the danger of the Israeli acts — which seek to impose faits accomplis before the final solution negotiations — to the overall peace process and to public opinion in support of the Palestinian-Israeli agreement.

Palestinian Affairs: Hamas Aide Reaffirms Continued Armed Struggle

MM0802114196 London FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH in Arabic Feb 96 pp 26, 28

[Interview with Khalid Mish'al, member of Hamas's Political Bureau, by Yasir al-Za'atirah; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [al-Za'atirah] Let us start with the dialogue and the issues leading to it. On what basis did the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] movement participate in the dialogue and what did it hope to achieve?

[Mish'al] The Hamas movement participated in the Cairo dialogue because we believe that a dialogue is the civilized way to communicate with members of one people and between the various quarters in the Palestinian arena. In Hamas, we tried through the Cairo dialogue to review the national taboos on which all our people are unanimous, such as banning in-fighting and refraining from anything that could harm our national unity. Also, the dialogue was adopted as the only way to resolve disputes and avoid more tension in the Palestinian arena, especially because this tension could have serious consequences and could prompt those conspiring against Palestinian society, especially the occupation and its agents, to exploit it to cause unrest and disturbances between the sons of one people. The Cairo dialogue was an opportunity to exchange views on the various issues raised by each side. Through the dialogue we tried to promote opportunities for coexistence despite the disagreements between the two programs, as long as national taboos are respected. We stressed to the [Palestinian] Authority [PA] the need to review its performance over the last phase and put an end to the blatant attacks on the slogans of democracy and freedom that it promoted upon entering the Gaza Strip. Our objective through the dialogue — and this is what happened in fact — was to reassert the need to reinforce national unity in practice and not just in theory, through respect for human rights and for the dignity of the Palestinian person, who has long suffered under the Zionist occupation. It is not right that he should be vilified and oppressed by his own people. Also, Hamas' reasonableness and high sense of responsibility should not be taken advantage of, and neither should our people be exploited for the sake of implementing the policies of pressure, oppression, and suppression of freedoms.

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[Al-Za'atirah] The dialogue's agenda focused on the issues of armed action and the elections. What exactly is your position on these two issues?

[Mish'al] The PA delegation put these two issues on the agenda. I believe that Hamas's position on these two issues is clear and unequivocal. Our decision to boycott the elections and urge our people to boycott them was clear from the start. There was never any question of backtracking from it during the Cairo dialogue, even though there was controversy in the media concerning our position on armed action against the occupation. I believe that this media controversy is no longer justified, since we reaffirmed in front of everyone, in the Cairo dialogue, that, as far as Hamas is concerned, this is a strategic issue linked to the presence of the occupation in various places and under various guises. Neither the PA nor anyone else is entitled to ask Hamas to put an end to its resistance to the occupation, especially since this occupation is still brandishing its sword, and not a day goes by without our people being subjected to more injustice, oppression, and torture, in addition to the settlers' escapades and crimes against our people's right. Engineer Yahya 'Ayyash's assassination early this year was neither the first, nor will it be the last, crime that the Zionist enemy and its security organs have committed against our people. Who will respond to it if Hamas is asked to relinquish the gun, the jihad, and the resistance option?

[Al-Za'atirah] Since Hamas refused to end armed action and decided to reject the elections, what were the points on which there was agreement?

[Mish'al] In the Cairo dialogue there was agreement on reaffirming national unity based on political pluralism, banning infighting, adopting the principle of dialogue as the only civilized method of communication between the various political sides in the Palestinian arena, in addition to providing the right climate for increasing trust and cooperation to achieve national objectives, making every effort to free all male and female prisoners in the occupation's jails, and also setting up a joint committee to tackle urgent problems.

[Al-Za'atirah] What is your response to those who see a political motive behind your boycott of the elections? What are your justifications in this regard, and your views on the issue of the elections and the elected council?

[Mish'al] Naturally, we refuse to deal with the elections issue as a separate issue and not as one of the results of the Oslo, Cairo, and Taba agreements. Consequently, these elections should not be taken out of their political context, isolated from their timing and framework, and dealt with as a separate issue or only as a step in the Palestinian democratic process.

Hence, we dealt with the elections in this general context. They are being held under the Oslo umbrella, and in the wake of the inequitable agreements which neither secured the minimum rights for our people nor provided the prerequisites for sovereignty and independence. Since there is no democracy without sovereignty, and no sovereignty without independence, and since our people's rights are still absent and diminished inside the territories, and totally absent abroad, we wonder how some people can view participation in these elections as a contribution to reaffirming democracy and independence.

We believe that the self-rule elections are nothing but a way to reaffirm the situation brought about by the agreements, confer legitimacy on this situation subject to the limitations imposed by the occupation, and reassert the policies of bureaucracy, corruption, and individualism which have flourished since the PA's arrival.

The elections are also taking place while the settlements are still in place and the occupation authorities are detaining over 6,000 of our people, postponing the Jerusalem issue, and treating the Palestinians there as foreigners who have to vote by post, in addition to excluding more than 5 million of our people in the diaspora. All these are the reasons which preclude our participation in them.

These elections, held behind a thick veil of claims of legitimacy — and this was their most serious element — will provide the justification and the means to amend the Palestinian National Charter and delete its principal and important articles. This is a debt that must be repaid within two months of the elections. The elections — through their outcome — will also provide the means to approve the final status formula and defer the already delayed serious issues until the final phase, which, in all likelihood, will go in favor of the Israeli position, because the Palestinian negotiator will go into them without any cards to play or real assets to use. This, in the end, means conferring legitimacy on the relinquishing of sensitive issues for our people, such as Jerusalem, the settlements, the refugees, border crossings, sovereignty, etc....

If we look closely at the election law, the timing of its submission and the expediting of its passage and approval by the PA despite the many objections to it from the various sides and individuals — in addition to the excesses committed during the election campaign and the clear bias toward the Fatah tendency, which supports the PA and the agreements — we would find

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that, thus far, the elections do not give any indication that the PA is keen on democracy, but instead that it is only keen to increase voter turnout and enable the PA's favorites to win seats in the elected council. Hence, we do not expect any significant change in the PA's situation, either before or after the elections, especially with regard to its relations with the occupation and its compliance with the latter's orders and conditions.

[Al-Za'atirah] Would you care to comment on Engineer Yahya 'Ayyash's assassination, and those behind the assassination?

[Mish'al] We realize that our struggle against this criminal enemy must go on, and that the sacrifices our people have made over the past decades, and the martyrs who fell or will fall on the path of resistance to this occupation — all this is the tax that our people have to pay for their liberation from the shackles of the odious occupation. Therefore the martyred leader, the hero and martyr-maker Yahya 'Ayyash, was not the first martyr, even though he was a prominent resistance leader and one of its noble martyrs and masters. Nor will he be the last, may God have mercy on his soul. For more than three years he has been chased by and has been chasing the forces of occupation, until the Zionist hand of treachery reached him with the help of treacherous agents. Therefore — and although we, in Hamas, accuse first the Israeli security organs of having assassinated the martyr 'Ayyash — we do not absolve other quarters who also had a hand in this crime. We have set up a committee in the movement which is still investigating the crime, and will, in due course, reveal the outcome to everyone. In any case, we cannot ignore the fact that the crime was committed in the self-rule areas and was one of a series of similar crimes committed by the Zionist enemy's agents since the PA's arrival. The PA did not make any serious attempt to stop these crimes, ensure our people's safety, and put an end to the activity of the agents who are attacking the sanctity of Palestinian blood and are committing the Zionist enemy's cold-blooded crimes against our people's right, within earshot and under the very eyes of the PA!!

[Al-Za'atirah] How do you assess the popular reaction inside the territories and abroad to the martyrdom of the "engineer," and how was this reaction expressed?

[Mish'al] The participation of more than a quarter of a million Palestinians from Gaza in the funeral of the martyred leader 'Ayyash, the attendance of tens of thousands at the eulogy ceremonies in the [West] Bank and the [Gaza] Strip, and the clear and strong reaction to the hero 'Ayyash's martyrdom within the Arab and Islamic nation say a great deal about the popularity of the valiant resistance to the occupation and the legitimacy of the armed struggle. This unprecedented reaction has shown to the whole world the true outcome of the referendum on the resistance, steadfastness, and jihad option as opposed to the Oslo, Cairo, and Taba agreements. This reaction also shows the level of support for suicide operations, and the masses' support for the Hamas movement, which was asked by the seething masses to avenge the engineer and the martyrs.

The magnitude of the reaction outside the occupied homeland is an expression of the rejection by the Arab and Islamic nation's masses of the humiliating agreements and normalization with the enemy, an expression of their support for the resistance option. It is also an expression of the attachment of the nation's masses to the leaders of the struggle and heroes of the resistance from among our Palestinian people.

[Al-Za'atirah] What are the clues to martyr 'Ayyash's assassination in Gaza, especially insofar as his assassination was preceded by that of several Islamic Resistance leaders?

[Mish'al] Martyr 'Ayyash's assassination raises again the issue of the failure of the PA's security organs to put an end to violations by Israeli agents in its areas. The series of crimes similar to the martyr 'Ayyash's assassination confirms this failure and reinforces fears about Israeli infiltration of the PA's security organs, and indicates cooperation and coordination between the two sides in tracking the mujahidin and facilitating their assassination. This cooperation is confirmed by the PA's failure to punish the occupation authorities' agents, by the fact that it is keeping quiet about all the crimes committed in its areas, by its reluctance to reveal the results of the relevant investigations, and by its pursuit of the mujahidin. We in Hamas, in view of the martyr 'Ayyash's assassination, can only blame the PA for allowing these crimes to occur in the areas where, supposedly, the PA is responsible for our people's safety.

[Al-Za'atirah] How will the engineer's absence affect Hamas's armed struggle, and can you respond to the occupation's crime?

[Mish'al] There is no doubt that martyred Engineer Yahya 'Ayyash's heroic actions have meant that his assassination is a loss to the armed struggle and the resistance. Our consolation lies in the fact that the martyred leader spent the time he was being sought training many of his brothers and colleagues in the battalions. The resistance and our people's struggle have taught us that martyrdom is the price of the resistance, but is also an incentive for its renewal and escalation. The people who gave birth to 'Ayyash and other resistance and intifadah leaders are capable

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of producing more. Blood calls for revenge, and the capacity for armed struggle must not weaken whatever the loss. Hamas has always succeeded in avenging our martyrs and our people's heroes. I am confident that Yahya 'Ayyash's blood will not be shed in vain, and the reward for the occupation and its agents will be equal to the action that their evil hands have committed. The hero leader Yahya 'Ayyash's martyrdom, with its apparent loss, will be, God willing, a catalyst for the spirit of struggle and martyrdom in our people and nation, and an outlet for its creative powers on the resistance and jihad path, for the cause of right and the liberation of the blessed land. A land that has produced Yahya 'Ayyash, and thousands of heroes and martyr leaders before him, will produce more heroes and great leaders, and will not accept the presence of the occupation on it no matter how long it takes.... The occupation will leave the blessed land of Palestine.... The jihad and resistance option will remain the only true legitimacy, the only hope of a smile for our people, and the only way to regain dignity, freedom, liberation and independence....

And when they ask you when, tell them it will be soon. [Popular Arab saying]

Palestinian Affairs: Hamas Magazine's Account of Talks With PLO

96AA0109A London FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH in Arabic Jan 96 p 11

[Unattributed article]

[FBIS Translated Text] Although the talks between the Hamas Movement and the Palestinian Authority [PA] in Cairo had not ended when we wrote this article, preliminary signs indicated that they could be the start for continued serious dialogue between the two sides in the future. Hamas has repeatedly called for unconditional dialogue with the PA. Hamas was keen to attend the Cairo talks with a delegation representing the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and the diaspora. At the same time, as he was facing the interim period elections and the redeployment in the West Bank under the Taba Agreement, PA Chairman Yasir 'Arafat needed something to reinforce his position in the West Bank cities and in the forthcoming elections. The only way he could do that was to exploit the period of quiet in military operations by meeting with the main opposition group, which, together with the Islamic Jihad, was leading the resistance against the military occupation.

There was nothing new regarding the agenda. 'Arafat attended the meetings with two items on his agenda: the first is ending the military operations through which Hamas has been dealing serious blows to the occupation, and the second is convincing Hamas to participate in the elections in any manner and under any umbrella.

Hamas sources affirmed that Hamas's position on these two issues has not changed. The armed resistance against the occupation is still its strategic policy as long as the occupation exists anywhere and in any form. Under no circumstances will Hamas be ready, at this time, to compromise on this strategy. Hamas's position on boycotting the elections is clear. Hamas confirmed this position more than once in the past few weeks.

What is Hamas's agenda in the Cairo talks? Since the establishment of self-rule in the Gaza Strip, Hamas has been keen to avoid direct clashes with the PA. However, by virtue of the occupation's pressures and the PA's weak response to these pressures, the relations between the two sides were marred by several negative incidents ranging from the balance of terror during the first three to six months to the first confrontation in the Filastin Mosque incidents. The mosque incident signaled the PA's decision to use force and detention against Hamas. This situation remained in effect until a few days before the Cairo dialogue. In the Cairo talks, the Hamas Movement is seeking to establish the basis for a common understanding between the two sides to prevent the PA from surrendering to the cycle of violence against Hamas. It is also seeking to prepare the ground for coexistence on the basis of unity, banning inter-Palestinian fighting, and respecting national efforts, led by the right to resist the occupation. This Hamas objective includes a list of demands concerning the PA's actions and methods in dealing with the people and Palestinian institutions, such as the press and the educational, religious, and charitable bodies. The list also includes the demand for democracy and respecting the Palestinian people's right to exercise their rights and an acceptable measure of freedom.

Therefore, the distance between the two sides' positions and goals in the talks is not small. One dialogue session cannot narrow this distance. The Cairo talks are successful because they ended the state of hostility and decommissioned the mechanics of confrontation and clashes. The Cairo talks would fulfill their purpose if the two sides became convinced of the importance of dialogue and set a date for another round of talks inside or outside Palestine.

The Cairo talks could be the start for a series of dialogues to ease the tension between Hamas and the PA. The two delegations would be wrong to try to exploit these talks to achieve quick gains to serve their political and public positions and programs. They would be anticipating events and exposing the Cairo dialogue to failure.

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It is natural for the two sides to enter the national dialogue in Cairo with major demands. It is also natural for them to raise any issue in these talks, because this is the most important characteristic of unconditional dialogue and perhaps the factor for its success. However, it is unnatural for the two sides or one of them to come to the talks with the attitude of either everything or nothing because this would definitely make it the first and the last dialogue. The Cairo talks are designed to establish a language of dialogue instead of confrontation. This demands that the two sides respect each other's views and priorities and not be inflexible and defame each other. This is primarily a national dialogue designed to serve the Palestinian homeland and people and their supreme interests.

Palestinian Affairs: Hamas Magazine's List of al-Qassam Attacks

96AA0109B London FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH in Arabic Jan 96 p 20

[Report by Ghassan Daw'ar]

[FBIS Translated Text] Some people in the enemies' ranks or who doubt the credibility of the militant Islamic movements have exploited the period of relative quiet on the valiant resistance front and began provoking sentiments against the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) and fabricating false stories about its inaction and retreat. However, we view our people's questions as a tremendous moral moving force and a great source of hope as we renew our determination and mobilize all efforts. The Martyr 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam Battalions have established Hamas's militant strategy on the ground through their qualitative and daring military operations. It is no secret to anyone that they occasionally need some time to evaluate the past period and calmly plan for a new period according to an appropriate political and military program and horizons. Anyone following up the developments in the occupied homeland can easily conclude that the Hamas Movement's military wing needed the past four months to review the situation following the successive heroic suicide operations that characterized that period.

One can also notice the series of military operations that successively took place since the beginning of last November. These operations have undoubtedly provided the answer to our people's questions and refuted the claims of those who doubted the credibility of Hamas. However, to underline this militant escalation, which shows a clear ability to respond to the crimes of the occupation and its settlers, and to refute the claims, illusions, and rumors, we will focus the light on the mujahedin's actions and heroism in occupied Palestine during the past few weeks.

Al-Ram Operation

At about 0800 Wednesday, 1 November, a mujahidin group attacked a vehicle driven by Rabbi 'Uzi Nibu, 33, at the junction of Kokhav Ya'qov settlement, near al-Ram Village and about 20 km north of Jerusalem. The mujahidin opened fire at the moving vehicle, seriously wounding the rabbi. The Hebrew press cited sources in the Central Command of the occupation army and the General Intelligence Service (Shabak) [Hebrew acronym for the intelligence service] as saying that a new armed cell of the Hamas Movement was behind the attack.

Operation on the Nabulus-Tulkarm Road

In an operation, which appeared typical of the ambushes al-Qassam Battalions have laid for occupation patrols and its settlers, a fedayeen group attacked an enemy vehicle carrying two settlers on the main road between Nabulus and Tulkarm, the morning of Saturday, 11 November. The attack left one of the two settlers wounded, according to the occupation authorities' admission.

The 15-Hour Battle in Dayr Samit

'Abd-al-Karim 'Awad Musalimah, 37, a commander of the al-Qassam Battalions in Hebron, has recorded an immortal 15-hour epic against several hundred occupation soldiers and dozens of armed military vehicles, supported by helicopters. At 2015 on 27 November, the martyr hero clashed with members of the Israeli special units disguised in civilian clothes. Large military reinforcements arrived at the scene and surrounded the al-Mutayanah area, near Dayr Samit. The occupation authorities imposed a curfew in Dayr Samit and Bayt 'Awwa and put up roadblocks on all approaches to the two villages. At 0600 of the following day, the occupation forces opened fire at three houses in which, they thought, the mujahid was barricading himself. The mujahid returned the fire and a fierce battle ensued with hundreds of soldiers, which lasted until 1045. The enemy forces shelled the besieged houses with antitank rockets. Following a period of calm, the occupation soldiers entered the area and brought out the body of the al-Qassam Battalions' martyr. He had been on the wanted list for more than one year on charges of membership in the Hamas Movement's military wing and participation in many operations and attacks against Israeli military targets. Thousands of our people, who were deprived of the honor of walking in the hero's funeral procession, visited the martyr's house in Bayt 'Awwa to extend their congratulations [as published] and express solidarity with his family.

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Ambush in Ya'bud

On the eve of Thursday, 30 November, a fedayeen group ambushed a military Jeep guarding an Egged Company bus while passing south of the Shaked Settlement, near Ya'bud, in the Janin district. The fedayeen group opened automatic weapons' fire at the soldiers in the Jeep, wounding several soldiers and damaging the vehicle. An Israeli spokesman claimed that only two soldiers were wounded, one of them very seriously.

Wadi al-Badhan Operation

On the eve of Tuesday, 5 December, an al-Qassam mujahidin group attacked a military vehicle carrying a soldier and an officer with the rank of captain. The vehicle was moving in Wadi al-Badhan on the main road between Nabulus and the Jordan Valley. The officer and the soldier were wounded and the military vehicle was damaged. The officer's wounds were described as light and the soldier as very serious.

Attack Near Bethlehem

The Martyr 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam Battalions shifted their field of operations to Bethlehem. A fedayeen group attacked a Jewish settlers' vehicle near the entrance to the Nabi Dani'el Settlement, south of Bethlehem, on the eve of 9 December. The mujahidin opened fire from a speeding vehicle at the settlers' vehicle, wounding two settlers, according to the enemy's admission.

Bomb Near Ramallah

Within less than 24 hours from the Bethlehem attack, a mujahidin group attacked the Israeli police station in Ramallah with hand grenades on the morning of 10 December. Although one of these grenades exploded in the station's courtyard, the Zionist enemy claimed, as usual, that the explosion caused no human losses. The occupation forces launched a search campaign for the attackers, who managed to return safely to their base.

Three Operations in Hebron

Hebron marked the anniversary of the launching of the Hamas Movement in its traditional fashion. These celebrations continued for three successive days. On 12 December, a fedayeen group attacked a military patrol in the center of Hebron with hand grenades. Although two grenades exploded in the midst of this patrol, the occupation authorities did not announce any casualties. On the eve of Wednesday, 13 December, al-Qassam Battalions attacked a Jewish settlers' vehicle on the Bani Na'im-Yata road. The occupation authorities admitted the attack, in which automatic weapons were used, but kept silent about the losses. They only said that an Israeli army force cordoned off the operation's area and launched a wide-scale search operation, using flares and police dogs.

On Thursday, 14 December, Ra'id Muhammad Idris, 22, attacked two Qiryat Arba' settlers, on their way to the al-Ibrahimi Shrine, with cold steel. The two settlers received moderate wounds. The Hamas member was martyred after being hit by a Zionist sniper's fire.

When the martyrdom of hero Idris was announced, shops closed and Hebron declared a state of mourning. Representatives of the national and Islamic organizations and many citizens visited his family's house to extend their condolences and express solidarity with his relatives.

We hope that this tangible escalation in militant operations will usher a period of more distinguished operations in quality and in tangible material effects than the past period.

Palestinian Affairs: Jordanians on Palestinian Confederation

96AA0111A London FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH in Arabic Jan 96 pp 13-17

[Report by Ghassan Abu-Husayn]

[FBIS Translated Text] While the discussion in Washington was centering on Peres' plan for a Jordanian-Palestinian political confederation and a Jordanian-Palestinian-Israeli economic confederation, arguments and debates were going on in Amman and the West Bank. Jordanian and Palestinian writers have warned against using such a plan within the framework of the peaceful settlement to end the Palestinian issue. Others supported the plan, believing that Jordan must support the Palestinian Authority [PA] to obtain a better deal.

FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH has sought the views of some politicians, academicians, and journalists in Jordan about their position on the confederation plan at this time, particularly as the Palestinians still do not have sovereignty. It also asked them whether the Jordanian Government's decision to grant five-year Jordanian passports to the Palestinians was part of this plan.

The following survey was the result of meetings with Shaykh 'Abd-al-Rahim 'Akur, deputy chief superintendent of the Muslim Brotherhood group in Jordan and a two-term deputy in the Jordanian House of Representatives; Dr. Mustafa Hamarinah, director of the Jordanian University's Strategic Studies Center in Amman; Dr. Fahd al-Fanik, a press writer specializing in political economy; Dr. Dawud Hananiyah, director general of the Arab Heart and Specialized Surgery Center and member of the Jordanian Senate; and Hamadah Fara'inah,

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member of the Palestine National Council [PNC] and press writer.

Shaykh 'Abd-al-Rahim 'Akur

We support any agreement between one Arab regime and another to unite the Arab nation in a confederation. This is the strategic goal of all the Islamic, national, and pan-Arab movements. They all want our Arab nation to unite in a confederation to strengthen its position and tackle future challenges. They see what is happening in Europe. The European countries have established the European Union and the European Common Market. They are also unifying their currencies. This is the era of blocs.

A confederation between the Jordanian regime and the PA is a different matter. If the Jordanian regime and the PA were really moving toward a confederation, I think that they would be contradicting International Law and its political principles, as we understand them. A confederation is normally established between two sovereign states with recognized borders. We do not think that a Jordanian confederation with the Palestinian Self-Rule Authority is consistent with the political principles of International Law. Jordan is an independent and sovereign state with recognized geographical borders. The PA is not a state in the international sense of the word. It is an authority providing services to the people under the hegemony of another state, which is the state of the Zionist occupation. The PA is not a government or state in the common sense of the word. Even the passports issued by the PA have the PA's stamp. This means that it is an authority within a state, or a ministry within a state, or a region within a state, but is not an independent administration.

The PA has no sovereignty over any part of Palestine, even the parts it is ruling, because Jewish settlements exist within the self-rule areas. The Zionist state directly administers these settlements. How then can we say that there is a Palestinian state seeking to establish a confederation with the Jordanian independent and sovereign state. Even his majesty the king thought that we should postpone the issue to see how the Palestinian entity will evolve. He also said that the establishment of a confederation will depend on the will of the two peoples.

If the king approves a confederation plan, I think he will be contradicting his previous position and statements. As far as I know, he has not made any new statements on the issue yet. I have not heard any Jordanian official welcoming the proposed confederation. What I heard from the king is that the establishment of a confederation is premature at this time, and that we must wait until Palestine gains its independence and sovereignty over its territory. Then the two peoples must approve the establishment of such a confederation. Regarding some government measures, like the issuance of passports, and whether they are part of the process to establish a confederation, what we heard on this issue was that the Jordanian Government was asked to grant such passports or stop withdrawing the five-year passports.

The deputies of the Islamic movement in the House of Representatives have protested against the government's intention to withdraw the five-year passports from any citizen. We understood that the king wants to grant five-year passports to the Palestinians who were citizens of Jordan in the past, before the disengagement between Jordan and the West Bank. We have never favored this disengagement. We have rejected it and continue to reject it. The representatives of the Palestinian and Jordanian peoples made the merger decision at the Jericho Conference in 1952. The Jordanian Constitution, which was amended after 1952, recognized that the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan was one country. Neither the Jordanian House of Representatives nor representatives of the Palestinian people have decided to end the 1952 merger. The merger constitutionally exists. We consider the disengagement decision as an infamous part of our Jordanian history, because it allowed the Jordanian Government to withdraw its responsibility for the West Bank, despite the justifications it had.

Therefore, the purpose of these measures, as we understood them and as translated in reality, was to grant the Palestinians five-year passports, as in the past.

Following the disengagement decision, the Jordanian passports issued to the Palestinians were withdrawn and replaced by temporary passports. Now it seems that the government has changed its mind about the temporary passports. This change is a good sign because it will allow the Palestinians to travel outside Palestine. I think that it is too early to say whether this is part of the confederation plan. It is true that the prime minister of the usurping enemy state has said that a confederation between Jordan and Palestine must exist. Still, I think that the Jordanian Government would not accept a plan imposed on it from outside without debate. We reject the confederation issue, as raised by the enemy's prime minister, because he is not a guardian of Jordan. This country has its own independent political system. The people have representatives in the House of Representatives. Jordan does not draw its authority from outside. Jordan, the Arabs, and the Muslims reject the confederation plan, in its proposed form and scenario.

Jordan rejects it because it gives the enemy the chance to exert pressure on the Palestinians to move to Jordan

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under the confederation umbrella. This will upset the existing balance in Jordan. The Palestinians reject it because it will help in closing the file of the Palestinian issue. The Arabs and the Muslims reject it because the Palestinian issue must remain alive. The attempt to empty Palestine of its people is an evil and criminal plan, because it means giving Palestine to the enemy. This is impermissible under Islamic law. The Almighty God made us view the land of Palestine not as a land for the Palestinians, but for God. We, as Muslims, are trustees of this land. We must not give it up because giving it up is like giving up the Ka'bah and the city of the Messenger of God—God's peace and blessings are upon him. This is unacceptable to God and to the Muslims. The proposed confederation is a crime and we must not keep silent about it. Every Muslim must voice his rejection of this confederation.

In short, we reject the Israeli-U.S. proposed confederation because it is part of the settlement and an attempt to create an alternative homeland. However, we have supported and continue to support the unity of the Palestinian and Jordanian peoples. We also distinguish between a genuine unity willingly achieved by our people and a confederation imposed by the usurping occupier.

Dr. Mustafa Hamarinah

First, I would like to refer to a very significant statement Moshe Dayan made, during the negotiations about the water project in the fifties, when he accepted an idea that the Israelis thought supported the Arab position. Responding to their objections, he told them: "If I accept the idea, the Arabs will reject it." This is exactly what happened. What I want to say is that in debating the idea of a confederation or any other form of union, we are considering a link between the two banks of the Jordan River. The people in these areas must find the best formula for such a link. They must establish the necessary objective conditions for such a link, and this cannot take place away from outside influences and American and Israeli pressures. However, the people must fortify themselves at home and improve upon what is being imposed. We must not immediately reject any idea about a link between the peoples as an Israeli plan. We must not immediately oppose a plan just because Israel, America, or Mauritania has expressed an opinion on it. We must always be rational and open-minded. We must think of our interests and work to improve the terms of what might be imposed on us from outside.

Some people say that those who call for confederation now and demand a union with the West Bank represent or support the Israeli line and want the people without the land. This is illogical.

The suggestions about a union or link between Jordan and what could crystallize under the PLO's leadership were made following the April war. The debate then was how can Jordan make the PLO an acceptable party for dialogue with the Americans and the Israelis. The Americans then were openly saying that they are against the establishment of a Palestinian state in any form. Why talking about a union then was acceptable and is not acceptable now?

Yasir 'Arafat has suggested a confederation with Jordan after the establishment of a Palestinian state. What I would like to emphasize now, as a reader interested in the developments, is that we must not make the same mistakes we made in the past, immediately rejecting what Israel accepts and accepting what it rejects. We must think about our interests. It is the fate of the Jordanians and the Palestinians to stay together. What is the best formula? This is what we should consider. We must establish a balanced relationship between the people in a country, which is moving toward modernization and wants to enter the 21st century by establishing the objective basis for it.

In fact, I see no sign to suggest that Jordan wants to stop the efforts in the West Bank to establish an independent Palestinian state, for several reasons. One of them is that Jordan, I think, does not want to become a principal party in the West Bank, because Palestinian nationalism is rising.

If you ask me whether we can now establish a union in which we can respect each other on the basis of equality within a modern state, I would say no. What we need is first to modernize the Jordanian state. Jordan should move to a higher level of political action and treat its citizens on equal basis.

On the Palestinian level, what we need to do is to help the Palestinians. We must not wait and see whether they will take control of a road between Nabulus and Ramallah and then establish a union with them. What we need to do is to support the Palestinians in the West Bank by all political means to help them obtain what they can. Jordan can play a role in this regard. We will not be promoting unity if we say let the Palestinians solve their problems first and then we can talk about other things.

The Palestinians alone cannot do much. The Jordanian social institutions must immediately open lines with the Palestinian social institutions to help and support them in the regional and international organizations.

As for the claim that the Jordanian Government is moving toward the confederation plan by adopting some measures, like granting five-year passports to West Bank

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Palestinians, I think that the passports issue has created confusion among the people in this country. This situation is similar to the confusion created by the survey conducted by the Census Bureau when people were asked whether they were citizens or refugees. Some people refused to answer this question. The same thing happened on the question of the passports. The passports' department has become extremely unpredictable, not governed by clear criteria, laws, and regulations. This unpredictability was misinterpreted as something more than an attempt to help the people of the West Bank.

Why are we talking about unity ties? This is because this is the normal thing. Unity means that we must meet each other on equal basis in a new civil society. It means building a new united society. Is it strange for people to talk about a union between Jordan and Palestine? Why?

Some people support unity with Syria, which is almost impossible. Some people support unity with Iraq, which is an illusion. We must first solve our problems with the people of al-Baq'ah (a Palestinian refugee camp near Amman), and then we can try to establish unity with Damascus. We must first solve our problems with the people of al-Wahadat Camp and make this country a better homeland for everyone. We must not call the Palestinians guests. The Palestinians in this country are not guests, but citizens. When we talk about them as guests, we place them beyond the law.

Calling the Palestinians guests is racist. The Palestinians came to Jordan after the West Bank was annexed. When a Palestinian moved from Nabulus in 1951, 1966, or 1968, he was moving from one governorate to another. We cannot deprive him of his citizenship retroactively. The Palestinians and the Jordanians should deal with each other according to this fact.

Some people might ask what the U.S. position is on the confederation idea? I say that this depends on the role Israel and the United States want to play in the area. The internal factors in the Arab countries surrounding Israel will dictate what role these countries will play. If the situation continues as it is, Israel will continue to maintain its military and economic hegemony in the area, but if the countries around Israel promote progress in their societies, the terms will improve. Otherwise, the situation will remain as it is now. The roles that Jordan, the PA—if it becomes a state—Lebanon, and Syria can play will be viewed from this angle.

Dr. Fahd al-Fanik

A confederation generally is not an acceptable option for several objective and national reasons. All the confederations in the world have collapsed, beginning with the Soviet Union and ending with Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. It is a failing system. Why should we embark on a system that we know will not work?

A confederation is a state with two systems and two heads. This is an unstable situation. One system will eventually topple and replace the other.

On the Jordanian side, we have the power of the state and the institutions. On the Palestinian side, they have the demographic power and international support. The world is aware of the Palestinian people's issue, but has not heard or cared about the Jordanian people's issue.

In practice, many known sensitivities between Jordan and the PLO have accumulated. Therefore, it would be more appropriate for us to wait until a broader unity is established between Jordan, Palestine, and Syria or Iraq or both. Otherwise, polarization will continue and the Jordanians will be a minority in a state comprising Jordan, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip. In other words, the confederation will be a Palestinian state, despite its name.

Jordan is a sovereign state. It cannot unite with people without sovereignty living under Israeli occupation and influence. This would mean extending the Israeli influence to Jordan. A fully sovereign Palestinian state is not expected to emerge in the foreseeable future. If such a state is established, we can then consider the issue.

It was not a coincident that Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres has proposed a confederation between Jordan and the Palestinians. Israel has always viewed Jordan as the solution to its Palestinian problem. Sharon [Ari'el Sharon, a prominent Israeli Likud leader and former minister] called this the Jordanian option. It meant letting Jordan run the affairs of the people and letting Israel maintain security and sovereignty over the land, including Jerusalem. In other words, the purpose of a confederation is to establish an alternative homeland for the Palestinians.

Regrettably, some people are promoting such a plan by exploiting national and religious sentiments. They are exploiting these noble sentiments to serve the Zionist plans and goals. These people have even accused those who resisted the confederation plan as regionalists [iqlimiyun]. They also accused them of opposing national unity. Such methods cannot deceive intelligent people.

Peres' confederation plan is not only a conspiracy against Jordan. It is also a means to liquidate the Palestinian issue and frustrate the idea of an independent Palestinian state on Palestinian territory—not on Jordanian territory.

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Dr. Dawud Hananiya

Before we go into the confederation issue, we must emphasize that the Jordanian Palestinian relationship has been and will remain special and distinctive. We must not think that this relationship is like the relationship between a Jordanian and any other Arab citizen for several reasons, including historical and geographical reasons. Complete unity existed between Jordan and the West Bank from 1950 to 1967. The two peoples maintained close family and commercial ties. This special and distinctive relationship between the two peoples will continue.

It is too early to say what form this relationship will take in the future. However, there is no harm in thinking about these future forms. A confederation is one of them. In one of its meetings, the PNC adopted a strategic decision on this subject. The way I understand it, a confederation is a union between two states. Jordan is a sovereign state with recognized borders. Palestine is not, although some steps have been made in this direction. Since no sovereign Palestinian state exists yet, it is difficult to talk about a confederation.

How can a confederation exists when the Palestinian territory is still under Israeli occupation. This is what I meant when I said that the establishment of a confederation is premature. Then, even if an independent Palestinian state was established, the Jordanian and the Palestinian peoples should decide whether to establish a confederation or not. I do not know what their decision will be. The Jordanians or the Palestinians might reject it.

It is not enough for us to raise a slogan and then find out that achieving it is impossible. Democracy will be established in Palestine. Democracy is progressing firmly in Jordan. What do the two peoples want?

I am personally not against a confederation between Jordan and Palestine. This is one solution. There are other possible solutions, such as unity or merger. Matters are moving in the right direction now.

If you ask me about the Peres plan, I can tell you that I have read Peres' book *The New Middle East* in which he discussed his idea about a Jordanian-Palestinian-Israeli confederation. I really do not think that this is possible. I do not think that establishing a nucleus for a union between the Arab states and Israel is possible. The establishment of trade relations and perhaps a common market is possible. Everything depends on how the Palestinian sovereignty will evolve. This is all I can think about now.

Regarding the recent Jordanian Government measures on the passports issue, although I am a member of the Senate, I do not know the details in this regard. I think that some departments have committed some violations in withdrawing passports and changing their validity from five years to two years. What happened recently was simply an attempt to end these violations.

Hamadah Fara'inah

As a member of the PNC, I support the confederation proposal. Our PNC has approved the establishment of a confederation between Jordan and Palestine several years ago. Therefore, in principle I support a confederation.

What has happened in Palestine, based on the multistage agreement to restore freedom and independence to the Palestinian people, speeds up two very important matters. The first is freedom and independence for the Palestinian people. This will give the Palestinians the right to determine their political future on their territory. The second is their right to choose the relationship with the twin brother, Jordan.

Therefore, I view what is happening in Palestine as a process toward the establishment of a future relationship between Jordan and Palestine. The confederation formula could be suitable or unsuitable, sufficient or insufficient. The Jordanians and the Palestinians will deal with this issue. The two peoples and the two authorities should have the freedom to decide what they want. Therefore, the future formula could be a confederation, a federation, or any other unionist formula. However, now I am committed to supporting the confederation formula between the two entities or the two states.

If you are referring to the old Sharon plan, I can tell you that I am not worried or concerned about what the Israelis say, although they are partners in shaping the future in this area by virtue of their presence. I am also not worried in any way that the Israelis are talking about our people's interests, like saying that there is an interest in establishing a Palestinian-Jordanian confederation. Just because the Israelis talk about a Palestinian-Jordanian confederation will not make me reconsider my position. Peres have expressed his own views when he talked about a Palestinian-Jordanian confederation. This might be to his own interest. I do not know. I cannot speak for him. I am talking about the interests of our Jordanian and Palestinian peoples. I am talking as a Jordanian and as a Palestinian at the same time. I am Jordanian born in Amman before the PLO was established. I am a Palestinian who lived in this country before the national unity was established at the Jericho Conference in 1950. So I talk about the Jordanian and Palestinian national interest.

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The fact that Peres or Clinton talk about a confederation will not detract from issue. The fact that Peres is talking about a confederation does not disturb me.

In answer to your question whether establishing a relationship between an independent Jordan and a non-sovereign Palestine is practically possible, I would say that there are positive and negative aspects. The positive aspect is that, with Jordan on their side, the Palestinians can achieve independence and sovereignty quicker. Conversely, without Jordan, this process will proceed gradually and will take longer. Therefore, the addition of a Jordanian effort is a positive thing.

If some people think that the PA has not completely regained Palestine—that is, the West Bank, Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip—and Palestinian sovereignty is still incomplete, they should remember the Jordanian experience. The Jordanian entity was established in 1921, but this entity remained tied to British policy until it received nominal independence in 1946. British forces remained in Jordan until 1956 when his majesty the king decided to Arabize the army. Other peoples in the world have gone through transitional periods. Even Israel itself began with a colony in northern Palestine and continued to expand until it occupied all Palestine in 1967. I am confident that this people and their national leadership and national opposition can continue the march toward complete independence, including Jerusalem.

The fear that Israel could abandon its commitments if a confederation was established now is valid. However, we must not view the issue from one angle—that Israel is the one that decides, can grant sovereignty, and can impose its will. We must view the negotiations as negotiations between two parties: the Palestinians and the Israelis. It is true that the negotiations are taking place under an inequitable balance of power that favors Israel and that the Palestinians had to accept unfair conditions because of this inequitable balance of power. Nevertheless, by depending on their resources, will, right, justice, the UN resolutions, and realism, the Palestinians are gradually regaining their rights in Palestine.

A confederation plan can be implemented between Jordan and the PA now, provided it is based on equality and partnership between the Jordanians and the Palestinians. It should not be established for the benefit of one party. Partnership must exist between the Jordanians and the Palestinians, between Jerusalem and Amman, and between Gaza and al-'Aqabah. This partnership creates equality between peoples based on common interests, kinship, and aspiration.

The unity, which existed between 1950 and 1967, suppressed the Palestinian identity. This was the major fault of this unity. Consequently, extremism emerged among the Palestinians after 1967, which led to armed clashes and the establishment of two authorities in Jordan. Therefore, we want an equitable relationship between the Jordanians and the Palestinians, without hegemony and sensitivities. I think we can establish such a relationship, based on common interests, kinship, family ties, economic integration, identity, and religion—whether Muslim or Christian.

If you ask me about the Jordanian Government's measure to issue permanent passports to the Palestinians and whether this was part of the preparation for the establishment of a confederation, I would say that the decision made by his majesty the king was frankly designed to reassure the Palestinians. The Jordanian economy and policies cannot proceed without consideration of the Palestinian national interests. Jordanian national security demands respecting the Palestinian national interests. Therefore, his majesty the king's decision was designed to provide reassurance to the Palestinians. I think that the Jordanian Government's hasty and arbitrary measures in the past, which included the withdrawal of passports and making it difficult for Palestinians to obtain official documents, created a state of psychological instability among the Palestinians. This situation has reflected on economic stability. However, the Jordanian generosity exceeded the limit and extended to the Palestinians in the occupied territory. I wish that the Jordanian decision to grant Jordanian passports did not include the people of Palestine, because it has created needless fears. The people in Palestine will receive Palestinian passports. Palestinians living in Jordan and Jordanians of Palestinian origin were the ones affected by the government decision to change their passports and cancel their citizenship. I think that this decision was unconstitutional. Therefore, I do not think that the Jordanian decision to correct the situation was part of the practical or procedural measures to establish a confederation. The measures to establish a confederation should be clear to the two sides. They have not yet initiated any discussion about a joint equal relationship between the Jordanians and the Palestinians, between the Jordanian and the Palestinian states, or between the Jordanian and the Palestinian entities.

Palestinian Affairs: PA Asks Israel To Allow Return of Islamic Jihad Leader

TA0902064096 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0500 GMT 9 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestinian Authority [PA] has asked Israel to permit Shaykh As'ad Bayyud al-Tamimi, leader of one of the Islamic Jihad factions, to return to the autonomous areas. The faction headed by

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al-Tamimi has assumed responsibility for many terrorist attacks against Israelis, including the shooting attack at a tourist bus near Ismailia in Egypt in which nine Israelis were killed. Shaykh al-Tamimi is one of the approximately 200 members of the Palestine National Council that Israel is being asked to permit to return to the autonomous areas.

Palestinian Affairs: Lebanon Allowing 'Fighters' To Join West Bank Force

MM0802115896 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 8 Feb 96 pp 1, 6

[Unattributed report: "Fatah Official Says: Lebanon Agreed in Principle for Fighters To Join Palestinian Police"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Beirut, AL-HAYAH — Colonel Sultan Abu-al-'Aynayn, Fatah's official in Lebanon, has stressed that "Lebanon has agreed in principle for a group of Palestinian fighters to be moved to the self-rule areas in Gaza and the West Bank to join the Palestinian police."

Abu-al-'Aynayn confirmed that Lebanese-Palestinian meetings "have started in order to agree on the final arrangements in preparation for securing their transfer," pointing out that "they will be transported by the end of February at the latest."

He declined to reveal the name of the Palestinian official negotiating with the competent organs, stressing that "meetings have been held between us and the Lebanese Government. We will not provide any details of what is being discussed in these meetings, because these details belong to the Lebanese state." [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs: Sweden To Provide $26 Million Aid to Authority

JN0902080396 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0600 GMT 9 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In the presence of President Yasir 'Arafat, [Finance Minister] Muhammad Zuhdi al-Nashashibi and Swedish Foreign Minister Lena Hjelm-Wallen have signed a $26-million agreement to help the National Authority.

At a news conference, President 'Arafat thanked the Swedish Government for its ongoing support for the peace process.

Lena Hjelm-Wallen said the agreement is a new link in Palestinian-Swedish relations. She said she hopes that other agreements will be signed in the future.

President 'Arafat had met with the Swedish minister at the presidency to discuss the peace process developments, bilateral relations, and Sweden's support for the peace process.

Arab-Israeli Talks

Arab-Israeli Talks: Israel To Replace Delegate to Syrian Talks

TA0902094996 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 9 Feb 96 p 5

[Report by Ben Kaspit]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Major General Sha'ul Mufaz will replace Maj. Gen. 'Uzi Dayan in the negotiations with the Syrians at Wye Plantation. Mufaz will leave for Maryland prior to the next round of talks with Dayan in order to get acquainted with the situation, MA'ARIV has learned.

At a meeting yesterday of the ministerial political team at Prime Minister Shim'on Peres' office, great satisfaction was expressed with the resumption of the negotiations toward the end of the month. According to Peres, there was a real danger that the talks would be suspended by the Syrians, as they received the news of early Israeli elections with distrust and disappointment.

Peres reported to the ministers that in the upcoming months the negotiations would focus on expanding the talks on substance, security arrangements, and the economic issue. According to the report, the pace of the negotiations will be more relaxed. The talks will cease prior to the elections — which will apparently take place in May — and resume several weeks later (assuming that Labor wins the balloting and receives a mandate to continue the negotiations).

The appointment of Mufaz, who will soon become head of the IDF's [Israel Defense Forces] Planning Branch, was welcomed by Uri Savir, talks coordinator.

Riyadh Taqibayn, head of the development department in the Syrian Agricultural Ministry, [name and title as published] met at Holland's flower exchange with Hilel Adiri, coordinator of agriculture and water with the autonomy in the Regional Liaison and Coordination office. "The Syrians are interested in exporting to Israel wheat, mutton, apples, and pears. From Israel, we want agricultural know-how on hothouses, especially for flowers," Taqibayn told Adiri. [passage omitted]

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Algeria

Algeria: FIS Leader Abroad Proposes Sending Negotiating Team

LD0802135696 Paris Radio France International in French 1230 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] One of the leaders of the Algerian Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] was offered an opportunity to speak in Sweden. Anouar Haddam gave a news conference in Stockholm this morning. The chairman of the parliamentarian delegation of the FIS was the guest of the Swedish Democratic Christian League.

Haddam called for dialogue and said he is ready to facilitate dialogue between the FIS and President Liamine Zeroual. He made a concrete proposal in this context. Anouar Haddam was interviewed by Christophe Boisbouvier:

[Begin recording] [Haddam] The FIS negotiating delegation has decided to send three of its members to Algiers. We ask the international community to persuade General Zeroual to give the necessary guarantees so this delegation can freely meet Dr. Abassi Madani and Ali Belhadj [president and vice president of the FIS, respectively] in order to propose to them a solution which would break the deadlock. It is up to the FIS spokesman, that is, Dr. Abassi Madani, to announce the result of this meeting.

We are sure that this will enable us to break the deadlock and move toward serious negotiations.

[Boisbouvier] Are you ready today to appeal to your supporters to give up the armed struggle?

[Haddam] We ask the international community to recognize the right of people to defend their elected bodies. The lack of recognition by the international community has only intensified the armed movement. We ask in this appeal that the international community persuade General Zeroual and his group to clearly express themselves on these values: respect for popular legitimacy and a change-over of power, the respect for nonintervention of the army in political matters; and establishment of a multiparty system. [end recording]

Algeria: FIS Leader Abroad Said Intending To Return

LD0802150396 Paris LCI Television in French 1400 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The chairman of the FIS [Islamic Salvation Front] delegation abroad has announced his intention to return to live in Algeria. Anouar Haddam, who is currently living in Stockholm [as heard], has asked Algerian President Liamine Zeroual to give him a guarantee that he can freely meet Abassi Madani, the chairman of the FIS.

Anouar Haddam said that he would return to Algerian accompanied by two other FIS leaders, Shaykh Ahmed Zaoui and Rachid Cherif.

Algeria: Trade Union Condemns Policy on Salary Deductions

LD0802151096 Paris Radio France International in French 1230 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The main Algerian trade union [UGTA] has vigorously condemned the government's decree to make deductions from employees salaries in order to pay overdue salaries to some 200,000 public sector workers.

Egypt

Egypt: U.S. Assistant Secretary Pelletreau Meets 'Amr Musa

NC0802221396 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2138 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 8 Feb (MENA)—Robert Pelletreau, U.S. assistant secretary of state for Middle East affairs, who is currently visiting Cairo, briefed Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa on the outcome of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's tour of the region, which took him to Israel and Syria.

After meeting Musa tonight, Pelletreau expressed the U.S. Administration's optimism about progress in the Syrian-Israeli talks. He said Egypt and the United States have agreed to consolidate bilateral ties, especially in trade, and to boost U.S. investment in Egypt.

Egypt: Musa Comments on Meeting With Pelletreau

NC0902105096 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2240 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Cairo, 8 Feb (MENA) — Following his meeting with Robert Pelletreau, U.S. assistant secretary of state for Middle East affairs, Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa said that there is an agreement to resume the Syrian-Israeli negotiations on 26 February and to continue them regardless of the Israeli elections. He noted that there is a tone of optimism in the talks. He noted that Pelletreau met with President Husni Mubarak this morning and reviewed a report on the results of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's latest visits to Syria and Israel to advance the peace process and on his meetings with Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Prime

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Minister Shim'on Peres as part of the efforts to move the Palestinian-Israeli track forward. He noted that the talks also dealt with general issues such as the situation in Bosnia and the situation with Eritrea and Yemen. [passage omitted]

Egypt: Envoy Urges Peaceful Solution to Aegean Crisis

NC0802152096 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1420 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 8 Feb (MENA)—Ambassador Fathi al-Shadhili, assistant foreign minister for European affairs, stated that in the present dispute in the Aegean Sea, Egypt's main concern is stability and a peaceful solution. He noted that the dispute has very sensitive historical aspects for Greece and Turkey. He added that Egypt has adopted the approach of peace and peaceful means and is interested in a peaceful settlement of all tensions and disputes in the area.

Today al-Shadhili received Greek Ambassador in Cairo Dhimitrious Vidhouris who explained the developments in the situation in the Aegean Sea.

Egypt: Economy Minister, French Ambassador Discuss Ties, Aid

NC0702211496 Cairo MENA in English 1544 GMT 7 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, 7 Feb (MENA)—Minister of Economy and International Cooperation Dr. Nawal al-Tatawi conferred here today with French Ambassador to Egypt Patrick Leclercq on Egyptian-French economic and trade ties.

Talks covered French contributions to various infrastructure projects whose total cost is estimated at 28 billion Francs.

The ambassador expressed great interest in the implementation of the water purification project in al-Jabal al-Asfar to which 345 million francs have been allotted in line with an Egyptian-French protocol signed in 1995.

The two sides also discussed the development of the Cairo district of north al-Jammaliyah district to which France has contributed up to 50 million francs since the 1992 earthquake.

Of this sum 30 million francs were offered to Egypt as a grant and the rest in the form of an easy-term loan.

Libya

Libya: 'Sources' Expect 'Wide-Ranging' Changes to Cabinet

MM0802190196 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 6 Feb 96 pp 1,4

[Report by Talhah Jibril in Rabat and AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Paris: "Al-Qadhdhafi Considering the Formation of a New Cabinet"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Informed sources have said that they expect the Libyan General People's Congress [GPC] (parliament) to hold a meeting during the month of Ramadan to discuss national and foreign issues and the formation of a new Libyan cabinet.

The current government led by 'Abd-al-Majid al-Qa'ud was formed on 4 July 1995 and includes 19 ministers.

The sources expect wide-ranging changes to be introduced in the current cabinet which could perhaps involve the prime ministerial post and also the foreign affairs portfolio currently held by two ministers, namely Jum'ah al-Fazzani, integration secretary (minister) in charge of Arab affairs, and 'Umar al-Muntasir, secretary of the external liaison office, in charge of international relations.

Some sources have indicated that the next cabinet may have a majority of technocrats. The GPC is also expected to approve the budget for the next three years.

It should be mentioned that, in theory, the GPC appoints the ministers (secretaries), while Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi plays a pivotal role in recommending appointments, in what is known in Libyan political terminology as "elevating."

It is expected that the program of the next cabinet will focus on the economic situation and on finding a solution to the Lockerbie affair, especially in view of U.S. hints that sanctions against Libya might be tightened to include oil sales. However, this measure faces strong opposition from the United States' European allies who might suffer as a result of any partial or total threat to Libyan oil exports.

U.S. circles have expressed their dissatisfaction with the fact that Col. al-Qadhdhafi recently received Louis Farrakhan, leader of the Black Muslims movement, and it was reported that Tripoli had offered substantial financial assistance to the black leader. Libyan circles see this as a normal step to gain the support of pressure groups within the United States.

In another development, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has learned that Libya has launched a diplomatic campaign targeting Latin American states. In this context,

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Libyan envoys will be carrying messages from Col. al-Qadhdhafi to some of the continent's leaders. This measure is aimed at securing these states' support in confronting the hardening U.S. position.

Sudan

Sudan: Nation of Islam Leader Assures al-Bashir of Muslim Backing

AB0802214596 Paris AFP in English 2030 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Khartoum, 8 Feb (AFP) — The 40 million Muslims in the United States back Sudan in its conflict with the West, Black American Muslim leader Louis Farrakhan said during a six-hour visit here on Thursday [8 February].

Sudanese President 'Umar al-Bashir has "refuted allegations woven against Sudan concerning terrorism," Farrakhan, head of the U.S. Nation of Islam organization, told journalists after meeting the leader. He discussed "the assault targeting Muslims in general and the Sudanese in particular" with al-Bashir, who informed him of Khartoum's position on last week's UN resolution condemning Sudan for supporting terrorism. Farrakhan said he assured al-Bashir that "over 40 million Muslims are siding with the Sudan."

Washington heavily backed the January 31 Security Council resolution which demanded that Khartoum extradite to Ethiopia within 60 days three Muslim militants suspected of being behind an attempt to kill Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

Farrakhan also called on the mostly Muslim north and Christian-animist south, embroiled in a bloody 12-year civil war, to join in a "national reconciliation," adding Khartoum "is faced with the south Sudanese problem which has hindered its progress and is also faced with neighbors who have become enemies." Sudan and its neighbors, moreover, should "sit down together to resolve their problems," he said. "There are nations which fear that Sudan could be a big power in the coming century. (They) fear that Sudan may be able to spread Islam in Africa," he said.

Farrakhan also met with Hassan al-Turaybi, the spiritual leader of Khartoum's Islamic rulers as well as Foreign Minister 'Ali 'Uthman Taha. And he held talks with leading officials in the Popular Arab and Islamic Conference, the political grouping headed by al-Turaybi, who is reported to be the main power behind the al-Bashir government, before leaving for Saudi Arabia.

Sudan: Bin-Ladin, al-Turabi 'Rift' Discussed

96AA0121A Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 29 Dec 95 pp 30-32

[Unattributed article: "Khartoum: Secrets of the Rift Between al-Turabi and Bin-Ladin"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Warnings seem more common than good omens in the vastness of Sudanese politics; it seems the walls of defense the regime put up and furnished with aid and support are about to collapse. What is true about the disputes that have risen to the surface in Khartoum's relations with Arab billionaire Usamah Bin-Ladin, immediately after which Bin-Ladin left his favorite home in al-Manshiyah south of Khartoum, traveling between London and Mogadishu? Is there any connection to the two attempts on his life over the past two years?

Why did Ibrahim Shams-al-Din, member of the Military Council and the administration's brigade commander, proceed to sow the seeds of dissension among the Sudanese and the Arab Afghans inside the structure of the Defenders of the Faith? And why did Bin-Ladin stop preaching in the mosques on the orders of the regime's guide, Dr. al-Turabi?

In what sort of atmosphere did Bin-Ladin leave Khartoum? And what of the connection between that and the Arab Afghans and Hamas, which have recently circulated anti-regime leaflets, after every prayer, calling for a redoubling of efforts for a call for a boycott of the thinking of Dr. al-Turabi, accusing him of blasphemy and atheism?

Is this surprise exodus connected to what is being reported by the dissident Sudanese National Grouping's media about the beginning of the collapse of one of the regime's most important security supports, the Arab Afghans? And what is the connection between this collapse and the close relations between the Followers of the Muhammadan Sunnah, led by Shaykh al-Hadiyah, and the Muslim Brotherhood group of al-Sadiq 'Abdallah 'Abd-al-Majid in the Salvation regime?

The following report answers all these questions and spells out the nature of the role Bin-Ladin has begun to prepare to carry out. Khartoum has learned his secrets, and the ties between the Salvation government and the Arab Afghans have entered a crisis.

Stormy Meeting

The summons from the Sudanese Foreign Ministry, in the person of Minister of State Dr. Ghazi Salah-al-Din, for U.S. Ambassador to Khartoum Timothy Carney [as transliterated], increased the confusion from which the

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leaders of the Sudanese regime were suffering following the continuing developments and the painful blows dealt the regular army in the war in the south. One city after another had fallen, with even Juba, the capital of southern Sudan, on the verge of falling under the control of the Popular Movement.

During his meeting with the U.S. ambassador, Ghazi Salah aimed harsh criticisms at the U.S. Administration, and at the way Colonel John Garang was welcomed upon his arrival in Washington to give his speech before a special session called by the U.S. Congress Committee on African Relations.

It is known that Col. Garang had arrived in Washington at the head of a delegation which included his political advisor Dr. Mansur Khalid and Ding Alur [as transliterated], director of the Popular Movement's Foreign Relations Office. After arriving in Washington, where he was accorded a warm reception equal to that of visiting heads of state and government, which infuriated Khartoum, he told journalists that his visit to the United States was part of the effort to step up efforts and to unite methods and Western support to topple the ruling regime.

To those who know Sudan's political secrets, the meeting between Ghazi and Carney was not only because of Garang's visit to Washington and the way he was treated there. It was much more serious than that. For the Commander of the Popular Army traveled to America more than once and has had close ties to influential people in the U.S. Administration since the days he was working on his doctoral degree in New Jersey University's Military Technical Academy.

Sudanese confusion was generated after Arab billionaire Usamah Bin-Ladin left Khartoum for London on a routine visit. However, security sources in the Sudanese Embassy in the British capital, London, have uncovered new facts relating to the Arab billionaire's repeated visits to Washington's embassy in London, and the man's conspicuous activity among Sudanese dissident forces based in Manchester, near London. These included apparently close ties between Bin-Ladin and the Popular Movement's office in West Europe.

Collapse of the Afghans' Security Wall

AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI's sources in the Sudanese opposition in Cairo date the beginning of the cracks in the Sudanese national security wall and the actual collapse of the Arab Afghan wall, and their relations with the Salvation regime, from May of this year. That month witnessed the failed assassination attempt on the part of extremist groups against the Arab billionaire as he was about to get out of his car in front of his house in the al-Manshiyah district. At the time, security authorities recorded the incident as being against an unknown person, which angered Bin-Ladin. The failed attempt made him think and made him suspect the closest people to him.

Sources say that after that failed attempt, the man actually began to prepare his flight from Sudan, to leave for good. At that time his contacts with Somali General Farah 'Aidid began to intensify, and the visits of the controversial Somali to Khartoum and his meetings with Bin-Ladin happened more frequently. Bin-Ladin was working on sending a large number of his followers to Somalia on the pretext of participating and preparing for 'Aidid's assuming power officially, after taking part in the civil war on behalf of Farah 'Aidid, the pro-'Aidid Islamic Party, and the strong ally who found direct support from the Arab billionaire.

Khartoum, in turn, was not far from the scene of the action or from the secrets of the close ties between 'Aidid and Bin-Ladin. Khartoum also knew of the desertions afflicting the ranks of the Arab Afghans, most of whom professed loyalty to the Arab billionaire.

According to opposition sources, it intended to isolate those forces from direct contact with both Bin-Ladin and ordinary Sudanese, especially after the capital, Khartoum, began to whisper about the number of secret leaflets the members of the Arab Afghans began to send out. These called for the rejection of the thinking and the direction followed by the Salvation Party, which is the thinking of Dr. al-Turabi. They circulated thousands of copies of *The Weakling Dictator: al-Turabi Reviles the Prophet* by Ahmad Malik, a cast off member of the Muslim Brotherhood in the ranks of the Islamic Front. In it, he speaks of Shaykh Hasan al-Turabi's comments about the Prophet's household and his many remarks about some reliable hadiths, such as that of "the fly," and his interpretations in the fields of jurisprudence and the fundamentals of Islam, his extremist call for interpretation in Islam, his description of the venerable forbears, the imams, as falling short in their understanding of the universal meanings of the faith, and his call for the mingling of the sexes.

Not satisfied with that, these people diligently preached in mosques after the five daily prayers, cautioning that al-Turabi's supposed paradise was nothing but an illusion and that in their support for the Salvation regime they had gone astray and would inevitably end up in the clutches of blasphemers and atheists.

Detention Center Guards

The authorities in Khartoum followed up these developments by making those Afghans work in the "ghost

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houses" that the regime set up for torturing its political enemies. All the prisons and detention centers were now guarded by them; the Arab Afghans also tortured the dissidents. This was done to keep them from the slightest contact with citizens, and from thoughts of going to Mogadishu.

The Islamic Front also undertook provide everything the Afghans needed so they could carry out their duty as fully as possible. They tortured political detainees, tracked patriots inside the camps and prisons, and kept in direct contact with the detainees.

But as these members try to carry out their duties inside the prisons, the sources say, their thinking has changed to embrace diametrically opposed ideas. The dissident elements among the detainees succeeded, with the knowledge they possess, in attracting their jailers over to their side. They showed them the extent to which the Salvation regime had anything to do with Islam. So they froze their aid to the Salvation Front and contacted Sudanese patriotic forces, offering their efforts to help bring down the regime and to protect Islam from the mischief of those who had fallen away. In fact, they went further than that and began to seek out those who were behind the arrival of that crowd to power to distort the image of Islam in such a way as to lead to the collapse of its foundations and to drag the country to the brink of poverty, starvation, and disease.

Surprise Rapprochement

The same sources confirm that one of the major reasons hastening the irrevocable divorce between the Salvation Front and one of its most important security supports was the surprise rapprochement in which the ruling Islamic Front entered as a party with the Muslim Brotherhood and the Followers of the Sunnah, two of Sudan's ultra-hard-line and traditional groups for the past 50 years.

It is known that these two groups had a clear and frank view of the foreign presence in Sudan, which was the direct presence of the Arab Afghans in the many camps and farms in Khartoum and various regions of the country. Their pretext was that the Afghans, with their numerical density and their mingling with society, represented a danger not only to public security but to the faith itself, among the simple Sudanese.

It is known that these groups both met in a joint delegation with General Bashir, offering in this meeting the sum of $8,000, from them to the armed forces for their war in southern Sudan in a surprise precedent whose effects still remain despite the passing of about one month since that event. That visit and that support attained extreme importance, because the leaders of the two groups took part in the meeting with the Sudanese President, with the joint delegation from Dr. al-Hibr Yusuf Nur al-Da'im and al-Sadiq 'Abdallah 'Abd-al-Majid from the Muslim Brotherhood, and al-Shaykh al-Hadiyah and Shaykh Abu-Zayd from the Followers of the Sunnah. It did indeed transpire that members of those two groups broke up a demonstration led by the Arab Afghans in the al-Kalakilah area south of Khartoum, in cooperation with members of the Defenders of the Faith. That harsh attack on the Afghans yielded the arrest of 200 members of various nationalities, on the charge of inciting "aversion to the state."

The news in Khartoum mentioned last month that groups of Arab brothers had stirred up citizens in the area of al-Kalakilah after a debate in which a number of members loyal to Usamah Bin-Ladin spoke and accused the ruling regime of blasphemy, and al-Turabi of being an atheist. They had circulated cassette tapes containing statements classifiable as inciting aversion to the state and threatening public security.

Beginning of Flight Outside Sudan

Opposition sources in Cairo have confirmed that the security agencies of the Sudanese Embassy in the capital of fog, London, had intensified their surveillance of Usamah Bin-Ladin's movements immediately after his arrival. For this purpose it assigned one of its most important security men, Abu-Bakr al-Sadiq, who in turn concentrated on the watching and surveillance of the billionaire Bin-Ladin. The sources say the Sudanese measures did not come out of nowhere, for after the recent developments and the war declared between the Salvation regime and Bin-Ladin's men among Arab Afghans, Khartoum took precautions for the likelihood that the visit request Bin-Ladin submitted to the Sudanese Passport and Immigration Department, to obtain a visit visa to the United Kingdom, would be an attempt to flee.

It is a known fact that like many extremist leaders in the world, who have Sudanese identity papers, such as Tunisian Ennahdah leader Rached Ghannouchi, Algerian FIS [Islamic Salvation Front] men 'Abbasi Madani and 'Ali Belhaj, and other international extremist leaders, the man carries a Sudanese passport.

Bin-Ladin had submitted his request to the regime's officials in the Sudanese Ministry of the Interior, setting out the reasons motivating him to complete the details of his trip to the British capital so he could be near developing events in a positive way, in order to put a stop to the Bosnian crisis, to enable himself to reunite the mujahedin of various nationalities and to facilitate

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the measures relating to their move to Mogadishu. This was because it has now become a recruitment center for these groups to assist Farah 'Aidid and his allies in the Somali Islamic Jihad to launch its attack and prepare for his coronation as president of the united republic of Somalia.

Abu-Bakr al-Sadiq, the security man charged with surveillance of the movements of the Arab billionaire, received a call from Ibrahim Shams-al-Din, chief of the administration brigade and member of the Military Council, immediately upon Bin-Ladin's arrival in London. Shams-al-Din confirmed to him that they should keep their eyes open to keep abreast of the man's movements and his contacts and London. The regime feared the man might have suspicious ties with the purpose of causing harm to the country's higher interests.

Contacts, Meetings

The surveillance men in Khartoum's London embassy had no trouble in establishing their subject's path, for Bin-Ladin had made his decision and turned his back on the Salvation regime. He had irrevocably broken with Khartoum. To the surprise of his watchers, his contacts took place in broad daylight, without the slightest secrecy. He visited the U.S. Embassy in London several times, and while there were several visits, his watchers were surprised by the obvious enmity between the U.S. Administration and the Islamic fundamentalists, especially as Bin-Ladin was seen as one of the most extreme of these.

His repeated efforts to contact figures in the Sudanese political opposition movement were also revealed to them; these efforts were doomed to failure. The sources said that the patriotic forces, represented by the parties and syndicates comprising the opposition National Democratic Grouping/United Kingdom Branch rejected the idea of sitting down and talking with him.

Then What?

Now that the facts have become manifest to the institution holding the reins of power in Khartoum, and it sees that its Afghani wall of defense has begun to collapse, can the Khartoum regime withstand the repeated blows it is receiving on more than one front? Is it within the power of the government's army, facing crucial defeats and a siege in the war in the south, to regain the nine cities that have fallen to the Popular Movement, whose leader, John Garang was in Washington seeking the possibility of a U.S. role in supplying new tools to topple the regime? During his visit to the United States, he was accompanied by Dr. Mansur Khalid, Washington's strong man in the Popular Movement's command structure, and Sudan's Foreign Minister in the era of former President Ja'far Nimayri.

The appearance of things suggests that time is not on the side of the Bashir-al-Turabi regime. The collapse of the Arab Afghan wall of defense means the regime has lost one of the most important supports for its remaining in power. The prison and detention center guards, the trainers of the Popular Defense Forces for breaking up demonstrations, and the tools for oppression and torture have now become the regime's deadliest enemies. The great escape to Mogadishu or any other place has begun-the result is the same.

The fear remains that those leaflets and calls broadcast by the Arab Afghans could cause turmoil in the understanding of the universal meanings of religion among broad sectors of Sunni Sudanese. Hence the fall of the Salvation regime has become much easier than eliminating the effects of those discords relating to faith and sectarianism.

Sudan: Opposition Leader Advocates International Sanctions

MM0802134096 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 8 Feb 96 p 5

[Report by Arlit Khuri: "Sudanese Opposition Confirms Intention To Form Armed Groups To Protect 'Uprising'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Paris — Dr. Mansur Khalid, official in charge of foreign relations in the Sudanese opposition Democratic National Grouping and former minister in the government of former President Ja'far Numayri, has said that the alliance intends to form armed groups whose task will be to neutralize government militias and protect any people's uprising that may take place in Sudan. He expressed his support for any international sanctions to be imposed on Sudan to compel the authorities to hand over three Egyptians suspected of involvement in the attempt on Egyptian President Husni Mubarak in Addis Ababa last summer.

In a press conference in Paris, Khalid said that President 'Umar al-Bashir's regime "has failed disastrously and achieved nothing at the political, economic, or diplomatic level. In fact it has ruined Sudan's relations with other states."

He said that local, regional, and international conditions were favorable to the opposition, "which should prepare for the change through coordinated joint action among all its factions in order to reinforce armed struggle and not to limit it to the south."

He added that the Sudanese opposition proceeded from this point in its recent meeting in Asmara and defined

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ways of implementing an agreement reached at a previous meeting held also in Asmara, which stipulated the right to self-determination not only for the inhabitants of southern Sudan but for the people as a whole, namely through a draft constitution which the opposition intends to apply when it assumes power.

Khalid said that the Asmara meeting had led also to a practical strategy which would be implemented on the ground. It provided for the establishment of a working apparatus inside Sudan.

He pointed out that the Sudanese regime's nature indicated that it would be willing to use force against any people's uprising — which made it difficult to call on citizens to take to the streets without providing them with the necessary protection. He said that this protection would be provided through trained armed groups that the opposition intended to form to confront the people's militias belonging to the regime, in order to prevent them from suppressing any uprising.

He ruled out the possibility of including any of the Sudanese regime's supporters in any government formed by the opposition. He pointed out that the ruling party was a religious party and that "there is no place for religious parties under the democratic system" that the opposition is aspiring to establish.

Khalid described the upcoming Sudanese elections as "a very bad joke" in view of the lack of the basic rights and the disregard for the parties and the unions.

Khalid expressed the Sudanese opposition's support for the international sanctions expected to be imposed on Sudan. He said that these sanctions should be very severe despite the further suffering they could cause for the Sudanese people, "who are currently suffering badly and prepared to suffer further hardship if they believe that they would be able to get rid of the regime."

He stressed his satisfaction with the results of the meetings he is holding in Paris, which were preceded by other meetings and contacts with U.S. and British officials in the framework of the endeavors made by the opposition to convince the Sudanese people and the world that it was an trustworthy alternative to the current regime and that it was working to topple that regime in order to establish a better one, not to return the situation to its previous state.

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Bahrain

Bahrain: Ramadan Celebrants Interviewed on Protests

NC0902120496 Paris AFP in English 0942 GMT 9 Feb 96

[By Lachlan Carmichael]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Manama, Feb 9 (AFP) — Bahrain's Shiite Moslems began a three-day holiday on Friday [9 February] after thousands marched here in a traditional late-night religious procession where they also uttered muffled protests against the government.

Black-clad Shiites beat their chests in unison as they marched through Manama's old city late Thursday chanting and listening to clerics who recited over loudspeakers the words of the martyred imam 'Ali. Between chants, some also said: "Remember the recent events," an allusion to 14 months of protests demanding that the Sunni-led government restore the parliament it suspended in 1975. But clerics kept them in line by reminding them to focus on religion and avoid politics; Shiite onlookers said overt protests could provoke the intervention of security forces who could not be seen at the procession. "We don't want to spoil the holiday" in which Shiites mourn the mortal wounding 14 centuries ago of 'Ali, the grandson of the prophet Muhammad, one onlooker told AFP. "This is also Ramadan."

Shiites in Manama and surrounding villages all vowed to resume their protests — which have included arson attacks, stonings and gas cylinder explosions — after the fasting month of Ramadan ends next week.

The Bahraini press on Friday ran front-page headlines urging world action on terrorism. The prime minister, Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Salman Al Khalifah, was quoted by the English-language GULF DAILY NEWS as saying "terrorism" threatened everyone and must be fought everywhere. Shaykh Al Khalifah said increased security measures had restored calm to this Gulf Arab archipelago of 540,000 people, according to the newspaper, which published an interview he gave to the Arabic-language daily AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT. "We hope we will not be forced to intensify these measures," the prime minister said.

Shiites attending the procession said that the government crackdown, which included the arrests of at least 200 leaders and supporters in January, had failed to cripple their movement. "We have planted seeds everywhere. They arrest one leader and another pops up," a school teacher said.

Some onlookers said they could discern the political anger of those taking part in the procession, adding they thumped their chests and chanted more loudly than in previous years. The thumping reverberated through parts of the old city. Some of the onlookers, who tapped their chests in time with the marchers, said their protest movement had widespread support from their own community as well as that of the Sunnis. But they accused the government of keeping the two communities apart.

A Western diplomat said he believed there was no "massive" Shiite support for the protestors.

Although some onlookers here conceded that many wealthier Shiites supported the government, all of those interviewed by AFP here backed the protest movement.

Shiites denied charges they received support from Iran and that some protestors had a hidden agenda to build an Islamic state. "All we want is democracy," one onlooker said. They also stressed their anti-government protests were not directed at Sunnis or foreigners. "You're surrounded by thousands of angry people. Are they doing anything to you?" a young Shiite man asked AFP.

Bahrain: Prime Minister on Recent Incidents, Gulf Relations

MM0802121896 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 8 Feb 96 pp 1,4

[Report by 'Uthman al-'Umayr in Manama: "Bahraini Premier Shaykh Khalifah Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: Incidents in Bahrain Aimed at Entire Gulf, Some Capitals Infuriated by Return of Calm"]

[FBIS Translated Text] To get to know what is happening in Bahrain one must meet the powerful statesman and Prime Minister Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Salman Al Khalifah. As is customary for him, he will meet you in his office, smiling, exuding undeniable seriousness and dynamism. He also seems to be in very good health, much better that in the past, despite having undergone heart surgery a few years ago.

Shaykh Khalifah met me in his office, and we talked for over an hour. Muhammad al-Mutawwa', the information minister, and Nabil al-Hamar, AL-AYYAM editor-in-chief, attended the interview, the salient points of which can be summed up as follows:

Incidents in Bahrain

[Al Khalifah] The incidents in Bahrain lasted a long time because we dealt with them patiently and quietly and in a spirit of forgiveness. Ours is a small, cohesive society with customs and traditions, trying by all peaceful means to direct those who have erred and guide them onto the right path. Therefore, we took a different approach when dealing with the incidents because we

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are convinced that those who caused these disturbances were deceived and misguided.

Exploiting Religion

Some people have exploited religion, using it as a cover for carrying out their objectives. Others came up with bright slogans and covers such as the talk about democracy.

Ours is a small country, its principal feature being safety and stability. This country does not have many resources or vast tracts of land, and stability is a basic requirement for the people as a whole in order to attract foreign investments, boost tourism, and provide job opportunities.

Targeting the Gulf

What happened in Bahrain is not aimed at it alone.... Bahrain is part of the Gulf framework, affecting and being affected by it. They wanted to have a trial run in Bahrain first.

Terrorism

Terrorism must be fought world-wide, and must not be allowed to die down in one area only to reemerge in another. Terrorism is one and its objectives are one, and there must be international cooperation and coordination to fight it everywhere.

The Arab Press

We feel the Arab press has made significant progress. But unfortunately some Arab newspapers have not taken advantage of this to enhance Arab causes, but instead have directed their resources toward launching a media campaign against the Arabs themselves.

Precautionary Measures

Our policy and measures have succeeded in containing the incidents and restoring calm to the country. We hope that we will not need additional measures. We wonder — with justifiable surprise — why some capitals were infuriated when the situation started to calm down in Bahrain. What brings them together despite their disagreements?

Welcoming Shaykh Khalifah

We welcomed Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Hamad Al Thani [amir of Qatar] in keeping with our customs and traditions for extending hospitality to a noble brother from a great family, for whom we have every respect and esteem. We welcomed him like all brothers in the area because of his elevated status and good relations with everyone.

Major Achievements

We are proud of what our country and people have achieved. Ours is a country with limited resources and capabilities, and yet we have laid solid foundations for a modern state capable of understanding the language of the time, equipped with a modern network of utilities and services, which are a strong incentive for international investors, companies, and banks.

Saudi Arabia's Position

The Kingdom has always been with us, and its wise leadership represented by Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Fahd Bin 'Abd- al-'Aziz, May God cure him and protect him, and His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdallah are in constant touch with us. In Bahrain, we will never forget this honorable stand by our elder brother, which, for us, was the best help and support.

Unequivocal Relations

We have adopted unequivocal principles and constants in our relations with others, based on the unequivocal principles of respect, cooperation, and noninterference in others' affairs. We hope that everyone will treat us in the same manner, for the sake of their interests and ours, and so that this region's enemies and those conspiring against it do not benefit.

Vast Support

The help and support that we received from the Arab brothers and the international community confirms the level of trust and the good relations that Bahrain enjoys with everyone.

Bahrain: Papers Berate 'Odd' Iranian Embassy Statement

JN0902100496 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0730 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Manama, 8 Feb (WAKH) — Two Bahraini newspapers today criticize the Iranian Embassy in Kuwait for distributing an instigative statement that includes fallacies and lies against Bahrain. They describe the statement as clear instigation and direct interference in Bahrain's affairs.

In a commentary today, AKHBAR AL-KHALIJ newspaper describes the Iranian Embassy statement as a serious precedent that violates all diplomatic norms and traditions observed in relations among countries, particularly those who have good-neighborly relations, because it promotes lies about the situation in Bahrain. This is blatant interference in the affairs of a sovereign state.

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In a commentary headlined "This Instigation and Revealing What Was Hidden," the newspaper adds that this odd statement by the Iranian Embassy clearly disclosed the reality of the Iranian policy toward Bahrain and the Gulf region in general.

It says that this instigative statement, with all the lies and fallacies it contains, attempts to ignite sectarian sedition in Bahrain. It depicts the incidents in Bahrain to be the result of differences between Qatar and Bahrain. The statement confirms all the doubts — which were aroused by many other incidents in the past — that the Iranian policy toward Bahrain and the Gulf region is not above suspicion. This policy seeks to fish in troubled water in order to destabilize the Gulf and sow sedition among the sisterly countries of the region and inside the gulf societies.

Concluding its commentary, the paper says: These suspect and hostile intentions that were revealed in a provocate manner by the statement issued by the Iranian Embassy in Kuwait confirm, more than ever, that the importance of coordination and cooperation among the Gulf states to confront these instigating campaigns collectively. This behooves all Bahraini citizens to adhere to the protective shield of the homeland, that is, national unity, in order to abort these tendentious attempts that seek to destabilize the country and disrupt its security, now that what was hidden was disclosed and the intentions of those who seek to harm the country surfaced.

For its part, the newspaper AL-AYYAM finds it is strange that the Iranian Embassy in Kuwait should level accusations indiscriminately without the least sense of responsibility or respect for the international principles that govern relations among countries.

AL-AYYAM notes: The Iranian Embassy's statement is far from what is customary and from the diplomatic norms and traditions governing international relations. It is also a conspicuous attempt to interfere in Bahrain's internal affairs. It goes beyond this as it assaults a Gulf body, that is, the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC].

The paper says: Bahrain is not accustomed to engaging in any sort of altercations. However, what the Iranian Embassy has done behooves us to examine it and discover what lies below the surface. This is something that should not be overlooked, because the statement carries many fallacies and lies.

The paper notes that what the Iranian Embassy in Kuwait has done is beyond its mission as a diplomatic representation office. It says that it is confident that the brothers in Kuwait do not approve of these clear diplomatic violations by the Iranian Embassy.

The paper describes the official Iranian statement as clear instigation and direct interference in the internal affairs of Bahrain, which is basically keen to have its relations with other countries based on respect and good-neighborliness.

It adds: The statement leveled a forthright accusation that Bahrain practices discrimination inside the country. This constitutes clear instigation to sedition and sectarianism which Bahrain, both government and people, utterly reject. There is no sectarianism in Bahrain. All the Bahraini people reject these attempts to divide them. They are aware of these attempts and will abort them.

The paper goes on to say: All evidence showed that some foreign parties were involved in the events that plagued the country. Given that Bahrain is a country that respects international principles, it has not leveled any official accusations at any party of involvement in the incidents — despite the fact that the misled group confessed that they were trained to manufacture molotov cocktails and received instructions in the Iranian city of Qom and the training camps of the so-called Hizballah.

The paper notes: We do not know just how Iran's claim that it cares about the security of Gulf region can go hand in hand with the flagrant attempt of its embassy in Kuwait to interfere in the domestic affairs of the GCC through creating a dispute between two sisterly countries?

It explains: Differences among brothers are natural. They can be settled within the Gulf family. What is unnatural is the Iranian Embassy's attempt to exploit differences among the GCC states. This does not serve the region and its stability. We condemn this approach which is rejected by all GCC members. The paper says that facts will always remain bright and will not be eclipsed by these fallacies and allegations.

Concluding its commentary, the paper praises the Bahraini Embassy in Kuwait for standing up to the Iranian Embassy's statement. It says that these fallacies should be disclosed and refuted because they are serious and exceeded all limits.

Yemen

Yemen: Salih on Economic Reform, Eritrea Island Dispute

JN0802172196 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Lieutenant General President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih attended a Ramadan evening held in the city of al-Mukalla, Hadhramaut Governorate, yesterday. [passage omitted]

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In a speech, the brother president expressed his happiness at meeting with the Hadhramaut Governorate's citizens during this blessed evening of the month of Ramadan, noting that he has come to the governorate to acquaint himself with the conditions of its sons and to listen to their concerns. He expressed hope that these concerns embody the aspirations of the people and that this meeting will produce positive results that will serve the governorate's awakening and progress.

Noting the current stage and challenges facing the homeland, the president said: Our Yemeni people, who — throughout history — were capable of facing difficulties and overcoming difficulties, are today capable of facing the basic difficulty facing them on the economic level. He added: Our battle on this level is a national one, which we must wage with the same spirit with which we waged our battles to defend the Yemeni Revolution in which the national will triumphed. The president reaffirmed the importance of mobilizing efforts and closing ranks to reiterate our capability to overcome difficulties and achieve our legitimate national aspirations in building a modern state and a prosperous Yemeni society, God willing.

Turning to the economic, financial, and administrative reform program, President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih reaffirmed the determination to go ahead with purging the state organs of corrupt and derelict elements and to take them into account. He called on the masses and honest people to cooperate, close ranks, and expose the corrupt ones.

Speaking about the Eritrean aggression against the Yemeni island of al-Hanish al-Kabir, President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih said: We did not expect this aggression from a neighborly and friendly country. Yemen opened its heart to its brothers in Eritrea to achieve their independence. However, what happened was their way of expressing gratitude. The brother president said al-Hanish al-Kabir is a Yemeni island, noting that Yemen will continue to be concerned to keep this sensitive region away from any tension or disturbances that do not serve its stability.

Yemen: Salih Comments on Island Dispute, Hostage Issue

JN0802210996 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1716 GMT 8 Feb 96

[From the "News Follow-up" program]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Brother Lieutenant General President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih attended a Ramadan evening held in the city of al-Mukalla, Hadhramaut Governorate, yesterday. [passage omitted]

Speaking about the Eritrean aggression against the Yemeni island of al-Hanish al-Kabir, President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih said: We did not expect this aggression from a neighborly and friendly country. Yemen opened its heart to its brothers in Eritrea to achieve their independence. However, what happened was their way of expressing gratitude. The brother president said al-Hanish al-Kabir is a Yemeni island, noting that Yemen will continue to be concerned about keeping this sensitive region away from any tension or disturbances that do not serve its stability.

President Salih said: I assure you that diplomatic endeavors have begun to achieve progress and success, and that efforts and mediations are being made by Ethiopia, Egypt, the UN secretary general, and France. Our country has recently received a memorandum from the French Government which includes an agreement that should be signed by the Yemeni and Eritrean Governments to resolve the maritime border problem between them. [passage omitted]

The brother president added: Security is the responsibility of all of us. You know that in the past few days some people carried out actions that harmed our country and its reputation by kidnapping foreign tourists. This was a harmful deed that does not befit our people's ethics, values, and traditions. We will never tolerate such criminal acts, and we have instructed the government to quickly issue a law which will firmly deal with such disgraceful acts that undermine security and stability.

The brother president said: In accordance with this law, every highway man or abductor of a foreigner or anyone who harms our country's security and stability will receive the same treatment as that given to the one who carries out an act of sabotage, and he will receive the same sentence as that passed against saboteurs. Moreover, all firm and deterrent measures will be taken against such persons. These manifestations should disappear, and there will be no room for them in our country. [passage omitted]

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Iraq: Dialogue With UN General Secretariat Resumes 8 Feb

JN0802170296 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1624 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] United Nations, 8 Feb (INA)—The delegations of Iraq and the UN General Secretariat today, Thursday, resumed their official dialogue on oil for food and medicine for the Iraqi people.

The two delegations are now holding the fourth of the official sessions that they began last Tuesday. Meanwhile, Dr. 'Abd-al-Amir al-Anbari, head of the Iraqi delegation, voiced hope that today's meeting would make progress.

Before proceeding to the meeting hall, he told journalists that the two sides would explore each other's views.

Iraq: 'Better Understanding' in Dialogue With UN Noted

JN0802213196 Baghdad Iraq Television Network in Arabic 2038 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Dr. 'Abd-al-Amir al-Anbari, head of the Iraqi delegation, announced that the two delegations have agreed to form small subcommittees that will meet tomorrow, Friday. [passage omitted]

'Abd-al-Amir al-Anbari also announced that the talks between Iraq and the United Nations have achieved progress. In a brief statement to the press before leaving the UN building this afternoon, he said that a better understanding took place during the talks.

The IRAQI NEWS AGENCY learned that the Iraqi oil expert and member of Iraq's delegation will meet with his UN counterpart later today. Meanwhile, the other experts of both delegations will meet tomorrow, in preparation for next Monday's meeting between the two delegations. The two delegations include oil, trade, health, banking, industrial, and humanitarian experts.

Iraq: Food, Medicine Distribution Discussed With UN Delegation

JN0802201096 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1938 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] United Nations, 8 Feb (INA)—Dr. 'Abd-al-Amir al-Anbari, head of the Iraqi delegation, announced that the two delegations have agreed to form small subcommittees that will meet tomorrow, Friday. The two delegations will also hold a general meeting of all their members on Monday afternoon. Dr. al-Anbari told the IRAQI NEWS AGENCY that the subcommittees would focus their discussions on food and medicine issues, as well as the basic human needs.

The United Nations also announced that the essential issues discussed with Iraq's delegation centered on the distribution of food, medicine, and other vital materials. It added that issues related to oil exports and banking affairs were also discussed.

Iraq: Perry Remarks on Iraq Dubbed 'Terrorism,' 'Arrogance'

MM0902100596 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 8 Feb 96 p 1

['Abd-al-Bari 'Atwan article: "Approaching Change in Iraq"]

[FBIS Translated Text] It is the highest degree of terrorism for U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry to state openly that his country is cooperating with Jordan and other states in the region to speed up the downfall of the Iraqi regime. It is also the lowest degree of arrogance and domination, and it should be confronted by the world as a whole. Neither the UN Charter nor the U.S. Constitution stipulates such blatant interference in the affairs of another state by changing its regime.

The strange thing is that the U.S. defense secretary, who is making these serious statements that violate all international conventions, is imposing a blockade on Iraq, Libya, and Sudan on the pretext of their disregard for the resolutions of international legitimacy. Are there any more blatant double standards or hypocrisy than these?

It is understandable for the U.S. defense secretary to work to topple the Iraqi regime, because it is — despite its weakness — the only one capable of confronting Israel and its expansionist ambitions in the region and putting an end to its domination of the oil and riches. He said this openly in the same statement, stressing his government's commitment to safeguarding the Hebrew state's qualitative military superiority over its neighbors and supplying it with the latest technological equipment. However, what we do not understand is the position of the Arab states that have agreed to "cooperate" with the United States against a besieged fraternal state that is looking for a loaf of bread and a bottle of medicine for its people.

Perhaps it was justifiable for some Arabs to rush to Kuwait's aid and to fight alongside U.S. forces to liberate it, because — in their view — Iraq had crossed the red line and occupied a UN and Arab League member state. But what is the justification for the current "cooperation" with the United States to interfere in Iraq's internal affairs and to partition the country on a sectarian and ethnic basis?

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What has Iraq, which is besieged and starved, done to Jordan that Jordan should cooperate with the United States in such a blatant manner to change Iraq's political, geographical, and human map and to fragment it on the pretext of rescuing it?

Is this how the Arabs reward Iraq for its heroic stances and support for them in all their wars and issues? Is this the way to alleviate the Iraqi people's suffering, by prolonging this suffering by closing the borders and slashing the volume of trade?!

We are not surprised by the revelation of these schemes, which coincide with the Iraqi Government's decision to negotiate to implement UN Security Council Resolution 986, which allows Iraq to sell $1 billion worth of oil every six months to buy food and medicine, despite all the negative aspects in this resolution with regard to Iraq's sovereignty. Because the common U.S.-Zionist-Arab aim is to break the Iraqi people's back, cause them to lose confidence in the Arabs and Arabism, and turn them into an exhausted people concerned only about their food.

When Rolf Ekeus was about to submit a positive report on Iraq with regard to the chemical and mass-destruction weapons, we woke up to reports of General Husayn Kamil's defection and his exciting information about the weapons hidden from the inspectors. Iraq suffered the blackmail of the inspection teams, cameras were installed in its plants, Iraq accepted a new demarcation of the border and implemented all the resolutions, including recognizing Kuwait as an independent superpower, yet they still invented the chemical mediums question and made a big issue out of the Kuwaiti prisoners question.

After all these conspiracies, we can only insist on the soundness of the Iraqi position and suspect the stands and aims of others.

Iraq is still the strongest, and they are the weak ones. What reassures us is that 200,000 tonnes of bombs, five years of siege, and advanced weapons worth billions of dollars have failed to bring about any change in Iraq or to harm its people's unity. So how can William Perry succeed in his endeavor, when everyone is now busy with their livelihood, the positions of all parties have changed, and Iraq has remained steadfast?

Iraq: Daily on U.S. Plan To 'Cancel' $100 Bill

JN0802214596 Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 31 Jan 96 p 1

["Exclusive" report entitled: "America Cancels $100 Bill"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Washington — The United States will soon put into circulation a new $100 bill to replace the bill now in circulation. The old bill has been forged throughout the world and is to be canceled. The new $100 bill will have secret markings that can only be identified by experts. This will make this bill different from the one in circulation now.

News agencies said that this decision aroused concern all over the world, because those who have the banknotes in circulation now fear that they would lose them, since it is difficult to change the approximately $25 billion worth of $100 bills in circulation outside the United States. The news agencies noted that despite the attempts by the U.S. Embassies all over the world, particularly in Russia, to dispel these fears by reiterating the U.S. Government's readiness to change the bills in circulation now, the owners of these bills outside the United States believe it is impossible to change all the old bills for purely practical reasons. Therefore, great damage will be inflicted on the owners of these bills, particularly in countries which impose restrictions on dealing with dollars.

Iraq: Rising Prices Termed Weapons of 'Enemies'

96LH0057A Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 8 Nov 95 pp 4-5

[Article by Mustafa Tawfiq al-Mukhtar: "Increased Prices Are One of Weapons in Enemies' Arsenal; Why Does Market Flare Up Whenever Any Sign of Imminent Lifting of Blockade Appears?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] After 2 August 1990, Edward Ludwig [as transliterated], former adviser at the U.S. National Security Council and director of the geo-economics section of the Washington International and Strategic Studies Institute, came up with an idea which he presented to the U.S. Senate prior to the 30-state aggression against Iraq. Briefly, the idea is that today's world has made conflict and the nature and instruments of war between states greatly different from those of conventional war. War arsenals have changed. Prices have replaced long-range missiles and fees and taxes have become an alternative to battlefront barriers. Research, development, and investment have become an alternative to counter offensives. Countries have come to use these and other economic instruments as the basis for their defense or offense. Therefore, now we

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live largely in a world of geo-economic wars. The most evident proof of this world is the use of UN economic sanctions against Third World countries and peoples and the creation of unrest and of civil wars in these countries. By using the new war methods and by employing international organizations within the framework of this new war, imperialist forces are accomplishing what they had failed to accomplish throughout decades. Prices are, therefore, one of the most important weapons in today's war arsenals.

With a simple review of what happened after announcement of the referendum, we notice how the enemies employed the price weapon and how prices rose sharply. This is what I pointed out in my article, "Indomitable Prices," published in AL-'UBUR on 4 October 1994. Markets experienced a sharp rise in prices on the day following the great march when the results appeared. It is evident that the schemers wanted to punish the Iraqi people who said yes to their leader. What had happened within the previous 24 hours to cause such a rise in prices? What had happened is just a "yes" said to the leader. Here arises the question: If price is actually tied to supply and demand, then what had developed in supply and demand in the previous 24 hours to cause prices to rise so sharply? The logical answer is that the hike had nothing to do with supply and demand. Here, another question arises: If this is so, then in what case do supply and demand mechanisms stop working? The logical answer is that in this case, the economy is either a minority-monopolized economy or a completely monopolized economy. Some may say that the blockade is the reason for this. The answer to this is that the blockade definitely influences supply and demand, and has been influencing them for five years. The fact is that we were under the blockade on 14 October 1995, and also on 16 October. The blockade has gone on uninterrupted, which means that this blockade has nothing to do as a mechanism with rising prices. Rising prices are connected with the objectives of the blockade, which are the objectives of the war itself. Prices would not have stopped rising if it were not for the president's decision to increase some food rations provided through the Saddam Husayn ration card, which is the sharpest weapon in our arsenal for the mother of all battles.

A question that surfaces here is: Who is responsible for this inflation? We could accuse this or that merchant or monopolist. However, the fundamental point that persists is that these people cannot at all operate in this manner unless certain mechanisms in state institutions enable them to operate this way. I do not mean here that there is agreement between state institutions and monopolists. What I mean is that these mechanisms seek the opposite but that the lack of accurate calculation of the consequences of a decision is what causes this effect. We can derive a simple example from the six days that preceded and followed the referendum: Prices rose after the referendum. When one asks about the reason in the markets, one hears that the reason is the levying of government fees on goods that are permitted to be imported. When I heard this answer, I asked people: Do you know the size of the imposed levy? All answered negatively. When I told them that the fee is counted in a few filses [plural of fils, or 1,000th of a dinar] and that the fee levied on a kilogram of flour sold for 700,000 filses was 15 filses, they were surprised. However, the surprising "filses" are not translated in the calculation of market prices. The market received the news that fees were increased. Subsequently the merchant, who is aware of the true nature of the fee but who employs this mechanism in his interest, proceeded to increase the prices by hundreds of dinars [D] as soon as the referendum results appeared.

This condition makes us wonder: Why is all this happening? Where are the government institutions, not in their punitive capacity but in their organizational capacity as institutions that are aware of the nature of the phase? In these institutions, have the people concerned become unable to understand the changes because they were accustomed in previous phases to operate under the umbrella of total bounty and big budgets? Have they become incapable of effective and dynamic rejuvenation under the canopy of the blockade? Have they become incapable of working within the constraints of limited resources? This management pattern makes us wonder: What are the interests of some government institutions which flow without agreement, or perhaps with agreement, into the private sector interest? We can derive the answer to this question by looking at the price increases as an indication of this condition. We find, particularly in this phase, congruence between interests of the management outfits of the two sides (private and public). This mechanism of sharp price hikes is likely to evoke in one way or another a response from some of those who work in the socialist sector's production management outfits. These outfits will move to withhold their production so as to sell it through the private sector in order to achieve financial profits for their establishments, part of which will go to their own pocket as a result of the profit distribution and incentives system. Otherwise, the people in these management outfits determine their prices by making their calculations on the basis of the prices established by the monopolist minority according to the speculation governed dollar exchange rates. Thus, the socialist sector's product pricing becomes subservient to the prices set by the monopolist minority, even though this basis is not used in pricing "goods produced

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for the private sector." Some may say that socialist sector products are not food products primarily. The answer to this is that higher prices, especially under the current circumstances, create an ideal condition for so-called inflationary waves. Moreover, numerous industrial products are sold to the private sector, and this sector then determines their prices without any economic consideration. Rather, price determination is governed by high profit and by the fact that pricing is a political instrument. Transportation is a cost element that affects the cost of transported goods, including food and agricultural products, which are doubly affected. Daily, all of us hear and see the pretexts offered by transport sector workers about the rising costs of materials. When the cost of a state-produced Babil tire reaches D60,000 or the price of a state-produced battery reaches D70,000, then it is certain that the shipper will base his calculations on loading the price with these costs, taking into account what the price will be in the future on the basis of his past experiences. This means that the price will rise and that prices have no connection with the fact that the state provides the commodity as long as the commodity ends up in private sector stores and as long as the private sector monopolizes it and will not offer it for sale until it wants to use it as a political instrument. Moreover, even though the importance of some goods, such as cigarettes, is relative, such goods have an impact on market prices. Currently, our market is influenced by any change in any commodity. Cigarettes are state-produced but they are marketed as if they are produced by the private sector. Their price is determined by the wholesaler [tajir al-shurjah], as he determines the prices of other goods. Price hikes in socialist and joint sector products do actually exceed price hikes imposed by blockade-exploiting merchants. When one argues with any merchant about prices, the response one gets is that the government sets high prices for its products.

Here, I would like to make a distinction between the so-called private sector in its conventional sense, which can perform a role within the context of competition, and the super-private sector which is a factor contributing to our current condition. Here, it would be right to use the monikers "private socialist sector" and "joint private sector."

To hike the price of a commodity such as tires or batteries affects not just the cost of transporting goods, thus justifying an increase in their prices, but also affects people with limited income, particularly employees working in government production or service agencies, as a result of higher transportation costs. The consequence of such pricing affects the productivity and enthusiasm of workers and, at times, motivates them to follow illicit methods to augment their income, not for luxury purposes but for reasons connected with survival. There is nothing more godless than starvation. Such behavior depends, of course, on intrinsic fortitude, but even intrinsic fortitude has its limits when starvation is involved. No matter what an individual's job is, regardless of whether he is a university professor or a minor civil servant, and assuming that his monthly salary is D10,000, the daily transportation costs he incurs to get to his job average D100-150, i.e. one-quarter his salary. If we also assume that this individual has to purchase bread for 15 days—supposing that the food ration is enough to last him 15 days, which is actually the maximum period it could last—and if we assume that the average number of family members is four, that each member's consumption is one loaf per meal, then the family's total bread consumption is 12 loaves a day. Considering that the price per loaf is D15, then the total expenditure in this area is the outcome of 15x12x35, i.e. D14,400 monthly [figures as given]. If the individual purchases a kilogram of eggplant daily, considering that eggplant is the cheapest vegetable available in the market and costs about D120 per kg, plus a bunch of chard, then his monthly expenditure in this area amounts to D1,800. By adding these figures to the family head's transportation costs, the total becomes D18,700. If we add the water and electricity bills, the sum will amount to twice the employee's D10,000 salary, which is a high salary. We should keep in mind that we are assuming that children are not enrolled in schools and that family expenses are confined within these limits. Moreover, if the father wants to take up a second job beyond the official work hours, his income will certainly not make up for the difference, keeping in mind that a second job will create additional costs.

The dark picture I have just presented is what the enemies want. The program for this dark picture is being implemented by the super-private sector merchants, the special socialist sector, and the special joint sector. With this mechanism, these merchants are stealing all the accomplishments made by Leader Saddam Husayn, who is targeted because he wants an honorable life for the Iraqi citizen. By a simple review of the mechanism by which prices are increased, we find that whenever a sign of the possible lifting of the blockade surfaces, prices rise by higher rates than when the signs of a continued blockade surface. This also happens with the dollar exchange rate. Here, we will reiterate a logical question about an illogical condition: Why is this happening and who is behind it? What is happening is not spontaneous. Neither the supply and demand mechanism nor the cost calculation of the socialist and joint sectors departments justify these price leaps. Perhaps we can find in the second part of the previous phrase a justifica-

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tion for these departments' motive, namely the incentives system. When the leader emphasized incentives in the 1970s and when incentives assumed their significant place in wake of the productivity symposium in which the leader put his finger on the elements of imbalance in the work system, the basis for this incentives system was to increase production, to enhance quality, and to reduce costs. Increased prices were not calculated as part of the elements leading to an establishment's profitability. Rather, increased production, enhanced quality, and reduced costs were the elements on which one relied and which one used to determine a commodity's profitable price. In our current condition, the incentives system has become an element that influences some aspects of the pricing mechanism. Even if an establishment's production remains unchanged, this will not prevent the establishment from showing higher profits in its annual budget account. Consequently, the profits distributed to the establishment director and workers will increase as long as it is possible to increase the product's price so it will keep up pace with dollar speculation accounts, for example. What we mean is that by virtue of this mechanism, which leads to the realization of a direct benefit for the socialist sector workers in a certain field, the wholesaler will be the party that determines prices of the socialist sector products, not vice versa. Consequently, the special socialist sector and the special joint sector will continue to chase the private sector, not vice versa.

Here emerges the question: What is to be done then? There is no single magic answer. Each aspect has its cures, but all cures remain tied to the crux, namely, how to confront this condition of minority monopoly. Primarily this requires, of course, prior diagnosis and definition. Without them, the few monopolists will block the way in the face of any cure. This is what we have noticed in the control on flour mills and in the commodity lists to which I referred in my article in AL-'UBUR on 4 October. So, should we rely on firm penalties? It has been proven by past experiences that this path has achieved no positive results. Moreover, it will be an added argument for a deluge of accusations in the human rights game. So, should the government return to the option of undertaking all the tasks? This path is difficult under the current blockade circumstances which tend to restrict government activity. So, what is to be done?

We are all aware that competition plays a significant role in influencing prices. Here, the government can enter as a party in the competition. It possesses the advantage of legislative, executive, and production instruments that can be employed in the people's interest. Whatever the degree of corruption that may occur in the government, it could never parallel the degree of treachery, corruption, and lackeyhood in the super-private sector. The government also possesses ultimate accounting instruments in the form of the tax agencies, for example, and it has the ability to demand legal accountability in case of violations. The government also has the power to issue financial disclosure laws and antitrust laws. Such laws are found in the most capitalistic system. All these and other aspects give the government sector an added power that enhances its competitive capability to influence prices. Here, one must note the dire need for the revival of some agencies which had played an important role in the price issue, such as the Trade Regulation Commission and the Central Pricing Agency which, by inasmuch as they contributed to drafting trade policies and price control and inspection policies, performed the role of research centers for trade and price affairs. These organizations should be revived in the form they took before they were abolished, taking into account the institutional developments and the new circumstances that have arisen in the past five years.

Despite all this, the degree of success will remain tied to expeditious implementation and movement and to the principled spirit and enthusiasm of socialist sector workers. Freedom will lead to inverse results, of which the most important is predominance of the belief that the government is unable to implement its program. Another inverse result could be predominance of the belief that the super-private sector mafias and their support for a timely slow down in government agencies can foil every approach employed by the leader to alleviate the hardship the people are experiencing because of the blockade. By reviewing the period during which the leader assumed the premiership, we find how measures and decrees adopted by the leader produced good results in the initial phase when the leader followed up on them. When government agencies took over the follow-up responsibility, however, we find that the measures and decrees led to inverse results and to worse consequences. This is because government agencies don't tackle them with the spirit of the leader who is concerned primarily with the citizen's interest. Rather, government agencies approach such measures and decrees with the spirit of an establishment or an agency whose top management is concerned with profit. At best, the agencies approach them idly. I will cite an example as proof. When schools opened their doors, students collected their books, and teachers instructed students to get ready and to bring their notebooks with them, more than a week passed before stationery was given to students. Prior to the opening, we heard for months that the Ministry of Education had made preparations to secure stationery for students. We also heard that based on its follow-up on the previous year's

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experi ..es, the ministry had found that it was better to su, ,ly the year's stationery needs all at once, but students did not receive the stationery because it had not been supplied to schools. Meanwhile, teachers want students to secure their notebooks! Does this not lead to increased burdens and to reviving the stationery business, boosting the price of a notebook to D750? It is certain that the same will happen in implementing the leader's directive that shoes and school backpacks be supplied to elementary school students. Thus, the directive will be voided of its meaning and content. So, my proposal that the government enter into the competition will certainly fail if state agencies act in this manner. Many other issues can be measured in the same manner.

By examining the health institutions, we find that the decision to distribute part of the medical service proceeds to the workers—a decision made to contribute to bolstering the working cadre's stability—has led in some cases to creating personal problems and rivalries that would not exist if there were a work pattern with firm values and precise discipline, but a gain added in the absence of discipline and of firm work rules has created new problems that flow into the channel of opportunistic conflicts.

We all remember how long it took the Central Bank to issue its directives when it was decided to open money-changing shops. It took the bank longer to issue those directives than it took to rebuild a building which the aggressors destroyed in their second round. Directives and requirements were then issued, and they were in harmony with the minority monopoly. It is impossible for a specialist who has not stolen and has not made exorbitant profits to open a money-changing business with a capital of millions. Did the young men who engaged in money-changing in front of the Baghdad Fair possess millions or did the millions come from those who controlled the young men and gave them a certain percentage? Thus, it is certain that the requirements are compatible with the secret lines and the rear lines, keeping in mind that the purpose of the decision was, simply, not to do this but to grant permits. I will remind those who experienced the pre-1964 period how the money-changers' market and the street adjacent to al-Rafidayn Bank abounded with money-changing market workers carrying cash [al-janbar] and operating in accordance with permits. So, does progress demand now a location that costs millions in rent, key money amounting to millions, and capital totaling millions to deal in currency? Does this mean that the implementation method is an invitation to hike foreign currency exchange rates greatly in order to recoup the investment? We all know that the investment rule under our current circumstance—a rule determined by the super-private sector—is based on extinguishing [recouping] the capital in a matter of days. In fact, dollar exchange rates did leap at the time by D50-60, rising to D120-140 per dollar, and then jumped again to reach D400 per dollar.

Thus, one can explain many inverse results that materialized when numerous solutions were implemented, whether in pricing products or in issuing commodity regulations, or even in the activities of joint companies and socialist sector companies that have, for example, reached the point that they now turn out products for a small shop in the wholesale market [al-shurjah]. Even if the shop is big, the sign [on the product] reads, "produced for the private sector," meaning for the super-private sector. The private owner has drawn even cooperatives and agricultural production associations toward his work principle, not vice versa, because private interest is affected by a sound implementation mechanism which serves the public interest. This is what private entrepreneurs don't want deep in their hearts and by the nature and requirements of their life, which has not experienced the blockade yet. What is more, a no-blockade state deprives these entrepreneurs of their advantageous opportunities. Is ignorance behind all this? This is unlikely. Is it naive in understanding the developments and their objectives? This is most unlikely. So what is it, then? To put it simply, everything behind this situation flows into the blockade's main objective, namely to break the people's support for the leader by increasing their living burdens. Thus, the enemies can achieve the plans they have drafted since the leader restored the people's revolution to the people, making accomplishments for them over more than two decades. What the enemies seek will not be accomplished unless a flaw is created in the government agencies, which do not work with the leader's promptness and spirit. As an honorable and principled man with whom I worked in public service has said, "A socialist sector worker who does not work to influence and lower prices so as to alleviate the people's burden takes part with Iraq's enemy in stabbing Iraq. Whoever resorts to voiding measures of their spirit participates with the enemies in reinforcing the blockade."

Therefore, any reexamination of the pricing of socialist sector products without calculating the cost of stabbing Iraq, and of the subsequent and added burden emanating from such an act, and confining the reexamination to pure economic considerations is tantamount to usurping Iraq's entire accomplishment. To calculate profits and incentives on the basis of the speculative market prices is tantamount to destroying the economic and social structure that has been able to stand fast. If the

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production agencies' higher management outfits persist in the same courses and with the same mentality which governed their activity when the government gave them generously and when they measured results and implementation rates by their spending volume; if they don't change and alter their courses to befit the blockade circumstances; and if they fail to understand the blockade's political dimensions, then they will contribute to intensifying the people's hardship and, consequently, to stabbing the Saddam-created model. Have these management outfits actually reached the point where they are aware of this threat no longer? Have they failed to change despite the blockade circumstances?

This is why we should keep our eyes on what the leader has reiterated since the productivity symposium that was held in 1976 and what he said to the 36th session of the Council of Ministers on 18 September 1995, namely, "We warned at the time and we warn now that if incentives are transformed into a part of the job salary, then they will lose their effect. Therefore, it is required to watch incentives to make sure that they don't swerve from the purpose for which they were created." We should never forget that profits play a fundamental role in increasing the financial yield which is included in incentives. Because the pricing mechanism influences incentives and because to respond to the movement of the private sector prices and their exorbitant profitability, which includes in part dollar speculation, leads to increased proceeds, then this means that the management outfits' option will focus on pricing and that they will drop any other criterion, even if the matter is fateful.

If we backtrack to 1989, we will notice that demand for the dollar rose in that year, not just because imports without external money remittances increased but also because of the action in which some joint sector companies engaged. For example, those companies requested high budgetary appropriations in local currency in a manipulative way because such appropriations did not face the possibility of rejection at the time. The companies based their calculations at the time on purchasing dollars from the local market at a higher price. Consequently, the exchange rate rose from D1 per dollar to D3 per dollars, meaning that the dollar exchange rate rose nine-fold, considering that the dollar exchange rate had been one to three. If this deficient method of calculation, which we liken to pricing on the basis of the private sector calculations, remains unchanged, it will certainly contribute, wittingly or unwittingly, to achieving the blockade's objective. Here, I cannot but address the leader, the man with a message, by saying: May God help you, sir, in steering the rudder of state and may He give you patience with the government management outfits so they will work to bolster the Iraqi people's capabilities. O How patient you were when you addressed the leaders of government workers, telling them, "When we meet with government workers, we feel that we are in a situation similar to our situation during the underground struggle. We never met with anybody then without considering first how to win him over to the party. Therefore, when we meet with statesmen, we cannot disregard the pressing ideas in our minds and the questions to which they give rise; questions that ask: How can we benefit from this meeting to offer the great Iraqi people something extra?"

May God help you to win over the government management outfits so they will offer something extra to the Iraqi people, who are loyal to their leaders. The day of the great march [presidential election] is nothing but proof of the loyalty of the Iraqi people who are straining under the weight of the blockade but who, nevertheless, have remained loyal to a leader who has restored to them their pride, which they have never abandoned. They have continued to refuse to eat even a piece of bread, unless soaked in dignity and pride.

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Israel: Peres on Palestinian Charter Amendment, Jerusalem Issue

TA0802143096 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 8 Feb 96 p A4

[Report by Aluf Ben]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Prime Minister Shim'on Peres met yesterday with Swedish Foreign Minister Lena Hjelm-Wallen and told her that "Yasir 'Arafat cannot be a member of two organizations at the same time, one that calls for Israel's destruction and another that calls for peace. He must make a choice, and if he does not have a majority to change the Palestinian Charter then he should quit."

Peres enumerated the outstanding issues between Israel and the Palestinians: the redeployment in Hebron, changing the Palestinian Charter, the third phase in the implementation of the Oslo accords, and fighting terror. According to him, "we will do everything that is required of us, but they must amend the Charter."

Hjelm-Wallen raised the question of Jerusalem, to which the prime minister responded: "I see no reason for compromise on Jerusalem. We do not want another Berlin. Jerusalem was never the capital of the Arabs, but only of the Jews."

Peres mentioned Orient House, and cautioned that Israel might close it down. According to him, "Orient House should be a cultural center and cannot become a political center. In principle, Israel will have no problem closing it down." The Swedish minister asked him whether Israel would agree to a Vatican-like solution in Jerusalem, and Peres replied: "The Vatican is a church, but 'Arafat will not make do with a church and wants the city." [passage omitted]

The Swedish guest said that Europe wants to play a more active role in the peace process. Peres responded that the strategy is to bring about a comprehensive peace that includes economic investments and that therein lies the European role.

Foreign Minister Ehud Baraq told the guest that he is sorry about her decision to visit Orient House, and warned that continued visits by European officials could push Israel to a situation that would lead "to an opposite result than that sought by the European Union."

Israel: 'Arafat Seen Exploiting Charter To Extract Concessions

TA0802114296 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 8 Feb 96 p 6

[Editorial: "Exploiting the Covenant"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In his meeting with Secretary of State Warren Christopher yesterday, Yasir 'Arafat reiterated yet again his frequently made promise: within two months of the elected Palestinian Council's first meeting, he will convene the Palestine National Council (PNC), known as the Palestinian parliament, to repeal the clauses in the PLO Covenant which call for Israel's destruction.

But a meeting of the PLO executive committee in al-'Arish on Tuesday [6 February] seemed to decide on a way to circumvent this commitment. Instead of repealing the 28 clauses (out of 33) that are offensive to Israel, the PNC will formulate a new covenant, which will serve as the charter of the Palestinian state in the territories.

One member of the executive committee put it explicitly: "The new covenant will be based on the principle of the establishment of an independent Palestinian state whose capital is Jerusalem, a total Israeli withdrawal from all the Palestinian areas in the West Bank and Gaza, the dismantling of settlements, and the delineation of borders between the Palestinian state and Israel."

The idea of formulating a new covenant instead of amending the old one seems to command 'Arafat's support. "Every era has its own covenant," he told the press. And it fits comfortably with his frequently repeated assertion, made most recently in last week's Stockholm news conference, that the old covenant has anyway been superseded by the PNC's decision to recognize Israel, and by his own 1988 dismissal of the covenant as caduq [last word in French].

Yet both 'Arafat and his lieutenants treat the covenant with what can only be described as reverence, comparing it to the Bible and the American Constitution. It is, they have said, a sacred document that cannot be tampered with.

Until recently, Israel insisted that there can be no substitute for an outright, unequivocal repeal of the offensive covenant clauses. Neither a new document nor an evasion in the form of "it is just an irrelevant piece of paper" will do.

Deputy Foreign Minister Eli Dayan was outspoken about this when he heard 'Arafat saying in Stockholm that the covenant had in effect been rendered invalid.

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He insisted that 'Arafat declare that the PNC will be convened for the purpose of repealing the offensive clauses, which 'Arafat then promised to do on April 12. Now Christopher has obtained the same commitment, albeit without a specific date.

There is little doubt that 'Arafat will not simply convene the PNC and repeal the PLO covenant. At the very least, he will try to extract Israel's agreement to the establishment of a Palestinian state in return. This will be selling the same goods twice. His initial commitment to repeal the offensive parts of the covenant was made in September 1993, in return for Israel's recognition of the PLO and the signing of the Oslo Declaration of Principles.

The government now seems determined to resist this kind of bargaining and demand that 'Arafat keep his pledge unconditionally. But 'Arafat also knows that his decision will affect the Labor Party's chances in the coming Knesset elections. As Dayan put it on Tuesday, "Going to elections without the cancellation of the covenant will cause Labor irreversible damage." It is unlikely that 'Arafat will not use Labor's need to his advantage.

It must be hoped the unconditional repeal of the genocidal PLO Covenant will not become yet another "red line" the government abandons in its rush to complete the Oslo process.

Israel: Negotiators Urged To Consider Turkey in Syrian Peace Accord

TA0802122196 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 7 Feb 96 p B1

[Commentary by Ze'ev Schiff: "The Turkish Angle"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Turks have been following the Israeli-Syrian negotiations with suspicion. They are afraid that the outcome of these negotiations — primarily things cooked up behind the scenes — will have an adverse effect on Turkey, which has several substantial disputed issues with Syria, from terror to the water issue.

What have the Turks been telling us? You cannot focus the discussions on terror solely on Palestinian organizations, such as Hizballah or the Islamic Jihad, whose leaders found refuge in Damascus. The negotiations should also address the terror issue, like many other issues, from a regional perspective. Therefore, Israel cannot ignore the carnage carried out by the Kurdish PKK [Workers Party of Kurdistan] on Turkish territory. The organization is based in the Syrian-dominated al-Biqa', and the PKK leader lives in Syria and is close to several members of the top Syrian echelons.

The question of Syrian-based Kurdish terrorism was recently brought up by Onur Oymen, Turkish Foreign Ministry under secretary, during his visit to Israel. The Turks have been raising similar arguments in talks with U.S. representatives mediating between Israel and Syria. The Americans do not want to encumber the negotiating agenda with Syria and, therefore, have left the Turkish terror issue for another occasion.

According to the Turks, the Syrian Government has a direct link to the Palestinian terror organizations, as well as to the PKK. Therefore, they maintain, it would be a serious mistake not to use this opportunity to pressure Syria about its ties with these organizations — ties that are also the reason for Syria's inclusion on the list of terror-supporting countries.

Furthermore, we have undoubtedly given little thought to another issue worrying the Turks: the future Syrian Army deployment. In their talks, IDF [Israel Defense Forces] representatives told the Syrians that they will have to deploy their army far from the Israeli border within the framework of the security arrangements. On one occasion, they said that if they deploy some of their armored divisions in the vicinity of the Turkish border and near the Iraqi border, the Israeli demand for a permanent early-warning ground station on Mount Hermon will carry different weight.

Turkish generals are asking: Should we conclude from your stand that to make things easier for yourselves, you are demanding that Syrian divisions be deployed under our noses, squeezing Turkey? Turkey, of course, has no reason to fear the Syrian Army. It has a stronger military, but it fears the trouble that may arise from the Syrian Army's support for Kurdish terrorist groups that infiltrate into Turkish territory.

Turkish representatives are saying, therefore, that it is ridiculous that, on one hand, Turkey is expected to use its rich water resources to help solve the Israeli-Arab conflict by alleviating the water shortage in Middle East countries south of Turkey while, on the other, no thought is being given to problems liable to beset Turkey as a result of a bad Israeli-Syrian agreement. In other words, the Turks are saying that we and others would do well to stop thinking that we can get Turkish water while ignoring Turkey's vital security interests.

The message to Israel is that it cannot make bombastic pronouncements about the peace talks with Syria leading to a regional arrangement while looking only southward, in the direction of Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf. We should start looking to the north, in Turkey's direction, too. Israel should be highly interested in avoiding even indirect damage to Turkey from

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the arrangement between us and Syria and even in guaranteeing Turkey's interests in any future agreement with Syria.

A precedent for this approach can be found in an agreement between the former Soviet Union and the West. When troop reduction in Europe was discussed, the Americans demanded that Russian troops evacuated from Europe not be deployed on the Japanese border. Furthermore, whatever the framework of the future arrangement in the region, Turkey should play a central role in it. Turkey is an important regional country. It has borders with Syria, Iraq, and Iran, among others, and it is highly interested in what goes on in these countries.

Israeli-Turkish relations have greatly improved in recent years, which is particularly noticeable in the field of defense cooperation and various related deals. The United States, for instance, has an interest in Israeli cooperation with Turkey in blocking Iraq along its border with that country. It is important for Israel to strengthen the climate of cooperation with Turkey, and it should, therefore, be more particular about the Turkish angle of the negotiations with Syria.

Israel: U.S. Exploring Syria-Turkey-Israel Water Arrangement

TA0802115396 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 8 Feb 96 p 2

[Report by David Makovsky]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Secretary of State Warren Christopher is consulting with Israel and Syria about the prospects of a regional water-sharing arrangement that would also include Turkey as part of an overall peace package, a top aide to Prime Minister Shim'on Peres said yesterday. [passage omitted]

According to the aide, "The Americans are talking to us about a water arrangement among us, the Syrians, and the Turks. It would not necessarily mean a pipeline, but rather an agreement on how much water should be transferred among the three states."

While refusing to divulge details on how much water would be transferred, he said he expects such an arrangement would involve some construction and cost at least a "few hundred million dollars, if not more." [passage omitted]

Israel: Peres, U.S. Maneuver Over Peace, Early Elections

TA0902115696 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV (SHABAT supplement) in Hebrew 9 Feb 96 p 8

[Commentary by Hemi Shalev: "Christopher Is Not Excited"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In his conversations with Prime Minister Shim'on Peres last week, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher complained that a primaries-type atmosphere has already taken hold of Israeli politicians. He compared the overnight shift of Israeli cabinet ministers' hard-line remarks with the recent hostile attitude of the Syrian media. "Both sides are too pessimistic compared with the actual situation," he said.

Peres did not mind Christopher's criticism — just the opposite. He viewed it as a confirmation of the thesis that he and other senior Israeli players were trying to sell to the Americans last month. The election campaign in Israel has, in fact, started, Peres told the Americans, regardless of whether elections are held in October or May. I would rather cut short the agonizing and call early elections, over holding negotiations with the Syrians while Israel's maneuverability diminishes daily. Come June, Peres said, you will have a new and reinforced government that will accelerate the negotiations with Syria up to the point of reaching an agreement before the U.S. elections in November. Reluctantly, the Americans bought the story.

For over a month now, Peres and his men have been busy convincing the Americans that advancing the Israeli elections is a must and should not be condemned. In his recent visit to Washington, Foreign Minister Ehud Baraq told anyone who would listen that holding the elections on schedule would mean that the opposition will keep the government endlessly engaged in Knesset filibusters. "The only reason I could afford to come here," he said, "is because I am not a Knesset member."

The Americans heard Baraq, and realized that early elections are a fait accompli. Their recent rearguard battle was aimed at denying any linkage between Christopher's last shuttle and the declaration on moving the elections forward. Christopher told Peres that he feels "overburdened" by being portrayed as the man who will decide whether or not early elections will be held. To the Americans, an announcement on early elections before or during Christopher's visit could have been interpreted as a declaration of their failure to attain progress in the negotiations with Syria. Peres, therefore, promised he would not make the announcement before Christopher's departure.

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The State Department found it hard to readjust to the new political reality, mainly because their working plan was based on the determined and unequivocal — now totally contradicted — message they received from Peres two weeks after he assumed office. He reiterated the stand he had maintained even before Rabin was murdered: "If I were forced to choose between an election victory and an agreement with Syria, I would opt for the latter." He announced publicly that he does not plan to hold early elections, that they will be held in October, as scheduled, and the Americans set their agendas accordingly.

During the following weeks, the Americans began suspecting that the political reality does not coincide with Peres declaration of intent. In public, they insisted that this is a "domestic Israeli affair" in which they would not dream of intervening. At the same time, using tacit and indirect ways, they made it clear that they do not like the idea of early elections. They were worried about the future of the contacts with Syria and the chance that Christopher would not be able to bring about peace with Syria on his shift. They were also worried by the negative impact early elections in Israel might have on Clinton's reelection effort, for two reasons: First, the bigger Clinton's domestic problems, the more he relies on foreign issues. A failure in the Israeli-Syrian negotiations might cast a shadow on his recent successes in Bosnia and elsewhere. Second, the last thing Clinton needs now is a Likud victory. It might create tension between the U.S. Administration and the Israeli Government — something that might reduce the massive Jewish support for the president, without which his chances of winning are rather slim. A Likud government that comes to power on 29 October, one week before the U.S. elections, will not have enough time to do real damage. A Likud government that takes office in May, however, might close down Orient House, quarrel with the Palestinian Authority, and send the Syrian president looking for "peace for peace." It might create an entirely different problem that the Americans have no desire to deal with.

In their briefings to the media, the Americans did not hide their concern over the trend toward advancing the elections. A senior U.S. official told the reporters who accompanied Christopher that moving the elections forward would be "a mistake." The American worries over early elections even superseded the real issues at hand in the Wye Plantation talks. Frank Keating, Republican governor of Oklahoma, told an Israeli official that Ambassador Martin Indyk had explicitly asked him to tell Peres that holding early elections is a bad idea. Indyk denied this, claiming that he and Keating were only exchanging ideas regarding the standing of political leaders after a traumatic event. I too, Keating told him, scored high in the polls after the Federal Building bombing.

"They asked questions," a senior Jerusalem source said, "but they did not say anything explicit." Yet even the unexplicit things worried Peres. He was worried that the Americans might accuse him of torpedoing the great chance they believe exists for the long-awaited breakthrough with the Syrians. He instructed his cabinet ministers to explain to the Americans the dangers of holding the elections on time and the advantages of advancing them.

Being extra-sensitive to American reactions is a necessary and desired trait for an Israeli prime minister, which is twice as true with Peres. His relations with the United States have always been charged and complex. He was angry at them for "abandoning" him, as he saw it, in his struggle for the "London agreement" and the "Shultz initiative" during the first unity government days. For their part, they were forced to swallow the bitter pill of the Oslo agreements that Peres organized under their very noses with a deliberate deception by Israel.

Rabin's relations with the United States were unequivocal. For him it was the only country in the world worthy of his attention. Peres' world view is more complex. In it, the Americans are not the only players.

The early elections affair did not improve the trust between Peres and the Americans. For now, they are licking their wounds. For lack of a better choice, they adopted the Israeli propaganda line. Peres, U.S. officials said last week, is convinced that moving the elections forward would strengthen him and facilitate negotiations on returning the Golan Heights. Thus, they made it clear to al-Asad that, contrary to their fears, Peres had not quit the game and had agreed to continue the talks, if only for the sake of maintaining them. In June, when the U.S. elections campaign picks up, they will come to Peres to collect the bill.

Israel: Agreements With Syria Listed; Peres Opts To 'Play Safe'

TA0902122296 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 9 Feb 96 p B3

[Commentary by 'Uzi Benziman: "Peres Is Holding Back"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Shim'on Peres has decided to play safe: He will present the voters with a process of negotiations with Syria rather than risk putting its results to a test. Had the Syrian president met Peres' expectations and held a summit meeting with him, Peres

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would have held the elections on time, stepping on the pedal of negotiations and completing them by October. Mentally, under such circumstances, Peres was prepared to risk the chance of his party's winning the elections for the sake of attaining a signed peace contract with Syria. But al-Asad refused to play. He knows now that he will have to meet Peres before signing the peace agreement, but will not do so at this time. Thus, al-Asad spared Peres the need to present the terms of the contract for the voters' judgment.

So far, the negotiations have gone quite well. Although the parties avoid putting in writing any official agreements, several formulas that will appear in the peace accord in due time have been worded. For example, the countries agreed that "the Israeli-Syrian and the Israeli-Lebanese peace arrangements will not be made conditional on any other process." They further agreed that peace between them "will put an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict." They also agreed that "there will be a normalization of relations between Israel and all the Arab countries in parallel with the agreement between the two countries, and Syria will welcome it." They even concluded that "the comprehensive (Israeli-Syrian) agreement has an economic aspect in which Syria will take part."

In the chapter on normalization, the parties reached an understanding that the clause on normalization in the peace contract will not be specific, and will list 12 areas to which it will apply. The common goal is to avoid drafting lengthy legal documents, but to aspire to practical agreements. There appears to be a readiness to settle the water problem in a regional arrangement that would include Turkey, Syria, Israel, and Lebanon. The United States will be actively involved in securing such an arrangement, and it is assumed that it will pay the Turks for their willingness to join it with several currencies: economic, security (convincing Syria to drop its support of the Kurds), and political (meeting Turkish expectations of the EU).

On the issue of security, the negotiations so far helped the parties understand each other's stands better. The Israeli team is now familiar with the Syrian red lines, and its members seem to have lowered their expectations regarding the chances of convincing the Syrians to accept the Israeli stands. The United States will compensate Israel on the security issue. At the same time, the Israelis feel that a compromise on the issue of border demarcation is possible. As for the issue of timetables, an understanding seems to be emerging that the implementation of the agreement will last two to three years, with the guideline being that the quality of normalization will dictate the pace of withdrawal from the Golan. It appears that the Israeli-Syrian contract will be accompanied by bilateral U.S.-Syrian and U.S.-Israeli agreements.

This outline indicates that, if an accelerated pace is taken, the negotiations may be completed in the coming eight months; if not a full peace contract, at least a document of principles could be drafted. Nevertheless, such an effort would force on Peres a high-stakes gamble: The negotiations may get stuck on the issue of border demarcation right on the eve of elections. As a result, with the price of peace becoming so tangible, Peres might be harmed at the ballot box. The U.S. Administration understood Peres' dilemma and accepted his decision in retrospect. Warren Christopher's announcements to the media indicated that the Syrians have also agreed to this and will cooperate in providing the picture Peres wishes to draw during the election campaign.

Only after the elections are held will we have an answer: If Peres is elected prime minister, it will become apparent that his decision to hold early elections has improved his status and authority to complete the negotiations successfully. If Netanyahu wins, the decision to hold early elections will be seen as a fatal miss of the chance to attain peace with Syria.

Israel: Commentary Criticizes Pentagon Document

TA0802151796 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV (HAYOM supplement) in Hebrew 8 Feb 96 p 2

[Commentary by Avino'am Bar-Yosef: "The Israeli Brain Is Inventing for Them"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Great America is defending itself against the Israeli survival instinct. This is the bottom line of the internal document uncovered last week in the Pentagon's security department, warning U.S. elements who maintain contacts with Israel about the "vigorous" activity of the Israeli intelligence services. In order to add color to the official paper, the U.S. security elements warn of Israel's attempts to take advantage of its "ethnic connections" in North America — that is, those belonging to the Jewish religion — and cite Jonathan Pollard's ideological motives as an example.

The U.S. Administration has apologized. It is not eager for a confrontation with the Jewish community in an election year, when it needs not only its votes but mainly its financial contributions. This publication, however, must not pass by without an Israeli reaction — mainly to the despicable attempt to turn every Jew into a potential threat to U.S. security.

I do not know what operations the United States is carrying out in friendly countries, but it is very likely that a large slice of the $31 billion at the disposal of

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the U.S. security services is not just earmarked for only enemy countries.

I do not know if the United States is spying in Israel and of whom it is taking advantage in order to further its interests in the foreign and defense policy spheres. The United States, however, does not have to overexert itself in the science and cultural spheres. It does not need any moles infiltrating into the secret recesses of Israeli industry. It simply buys the most brilliant Israeli brains and talents.

First it has adopted our musicians. Rare talents such as Itzhak Perlman, Pinchas Zukerman, and Gil Shaham, who fill concert halls throughout America and who can be heard at length on American radio and television stations. Later it turned to the academic and scientific spheres. In my Washington residential area alone reside several first-rate Israeli scientists whose absence from Israel causes it much greater damage than the advantage it stands to accrue from the interest it shows in U.S. industry.

The Pentagon document warns, among other things, of Israel's interest in the nuclear sphere. It fails to mention, however, the names of Dr. Shay Feldman, a Tel Aviv University nuclear policy expert who this year received a post at Harvard University; Professor Moshe Rosen, who was one of the heads of the Dimona Nuclear Reactor and Ben-Gurion University and who now heads the Physical Particles Department at the prestigious John Hopkins University; Prof. Marcel Kalpish of Hebrew University who landed straight in the open arms of the U.S. Navy laboratories; Dr. Yuval Karmel, one of the most brilliant brains at REFA'EL [Armament Development Authority], who was grabbed by the University of Maryland's research department, as well as many of his colleagues who came to the United States on sabbatical and were later laid off due to cutbacks in Israeli research and development funds.

The U.S. document "reveals" that Israel is conducting an extensive information-gathering operation in advanced technological spheres such as aeronautic equipment, information from spy satellites, and theater defense missiles. It fails to mention, however, the Israeli brains recruited to develop American lasers: Prof. Amnon Yariv of the prestigious California Institute of Technology, who specializes in electro-optics; Profs. Peretz Friedman and Moshe Rubinstein in the aeronautics sphere; and Prof. Moshe Rom, a former Likud Knesset member, who divides his time between Haifa's Technion and the laboratories of NASA and the U.S. Army, seeing that no funds were found for developing his revolutionary invention in missile propulsion technology, which may also serve as a solution to the "super-gun."

The Pentagon is casting on Israel the suspicion that it has pinched a microchip which was developed in the United States. It fails to mention, however, the dozens of Technion graduates such as Rafi Klein, who have made their homes in California's Silicon Valley and today head U.S. companies manufacturing microchips and machines for the manufacture of microchips.

Some time ago, during a visit to a Washington research institute, I met Dov Zakheim, a former senior U.S. Administration official who buried the Lavi fighter. I reprimanded Zakheim, a religious American Jew, for the damage he caused Israeli science with his relentless struggle against the Lavi's development.

Zakheim looked at me with surprise and said: "My job was to serve U.S. interests. It is not my fault that people in Israel did not understand the damage caused to Israeli interests."

Zakheim is obviously right. Moshe Arens, who understood the damage, resigned his post as defense minister in the wake of the government's decision to drop the project.

The Pentagon has nothing to worry about from American Jewry's "ethnic connection" to Israel. This is how things should be. Israel should take care of its own interests, and this refers not only to its scientific interests. We should also regard the struggle over the Golan Heights in relation to the aforementioned Israeli survival instincts.

Israel: Peres, Swedish Foreign Minister Discuss GSS Law

TA0702162896 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1500 GMT 7 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Staying alive is also one of the human rights, Prime Minister Shim'on Peres has told visiting Swedish Foreign Minister Lena Hjelm-Wallen. Hjelm-Wallen had complained to the premier about new legislation authorizing the General Security Service [GSS] to use pressure if necessary to obtain information in cases of life and death. She claimed it placed the method of torture in the country's statutes books. But Peres, talking to reporters after the meeting, said he told the Swedish minister just why pressure was sometimes needed:

[Begin Peres recording] She complained, and I explained to her there is no room for complaints, because the slight measures of pressure are only when there is a clear information that a bomb may kill some other people, and I have explained to the foreign minister of Sweden that to remain alive is also a human right. [end recording]

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Hjelm-Wallen also informed Peres that she intended visiting the Palestinian headquarters at Orient House in East Jerusalem. For his part, Peres said it would be no problem for Israel to close the premises if the Palestinians used it for political purposes.

Israel: More on Baraq Remarks in Meeting With Swedish Counterpart

TA0802132096 Jerusalem GOVERNMENT PRESS OFFICE in English 1930 GMT 7 Feb 96

[Communication released by the Foreign Ministry spokesman]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Foreign Minister Ehud Baraq met today (Wednesday), 07.02.96, with Swedish Foreign Minister Lena Hjelm-Wallen. Foreign Minister Baraq praised U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's announcement regarding the resumption of talks with Syria and expressed hope that the Israeli elections — if they are brought forward — will cause only minimal delays in the momentum of the talks. He said that even though progress in the negotiations has been slow, it is already possible to distinguish a number of issues — including normalization and comprehensiveness — in which there has been considerable forward movement. Even on the complicated and complex issue of security arrangements, it is possible, today, to hold a genuine dialogue. Israel attributes great importance to this issue. Security arrangements must prevent any possibility of a surprise attack, a general attack, a deterioration from isolated incidents into a general confrontation. Such complex negotiations — which are designed to solve a decades-long conflict — require time, Baraq added.

In response to a question from his guest about the possible role of the European Union in the process, Baraq said that when the time comes, the community of industrialized nations will need to become involved in efforts for regional economic development. Foreign Ministry Director-General Uri Savir added that in this context, the United States, Europe, and Japan must not be satisfied with direct aid alone, but must encourage both Israeli-Syrian and regional cooperation.

Foreign Minister Baraq expressed regret over the his guest's decision to visit Orient House, and added that repeated visits by senior European officials there is liable to push Israel into a situation in which it will be obliged to take measures that will — in the end — lead to results opposite to those which the European Union is seeking to achieve. He further added that activity at Orient House violates the agreement with the Palestinians and is leading to a sharpening of the Jerusalem issue before the talks on the permanent settlement have begun. Our position in these negotiations, Baraq said, will be clear: a united Jerusalem under full Israeli sovereignty is — and must remain — the capital of Israel. Israel expects European countries to show greater sensitivity on problematic issues which are on the agenda.

Foreign Minister Baraq raised the issue of Iran, which he defined as the main threat in the region today. Iran exports fundamentalism, supports terrorism as a political tool, is trying to take over the Persian Gulf, and is working feverishly to obtain a nuclear capability. All of these require the international community to be cautious and take a responsible and long-range approach regarding Iran.

On the Palestinian issue, Baraq said that 'Arafat's election by a convincing majority and the new legitimacy that he enjoys, require him — more than ever — to uphold his commitments under the interim agreement regarding the prevention of terrorism and the abrogation of the Palestinian Covenant. Israel views this as a credibility test for Arafat and the Palestinian Authority. It will be difficult to enter negotiations on the permanent settlement — which will deal with extremely vital issues — if there is no certainty that written agreements will indeed be fully carried out. Baraq said that 'Arafat must cross the Rubicon and declare that the destruction of Israel is no longer on the Arab agenda.

The Swedish Foreign Minister said that during 'Arafat's recent visit to Stockholm, she indeed encouraged him to fulfill his obligations. Sweden also believes that it is difficult to hold negotiations in the shadow of such a Covenant.

Israel: Polls Show Peres Beating Netanyahu in Elections

TA0802192696 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 8 Feb 96

[Studio discussion between anchor Hayim Yavin and political commentator Nisim Mish'al — live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Mish'al] We have some very interesting polls. In Hanokh Smith's poll, Shim'on Peres won 50 percent and Binyamin Netanyahu 38 percent. According to Teleseqer, Peres has 49 percent and Netanyahu has 36 percent. Therefore, the gap between them is closing and is 12-13 percent. That situation is also the view of all the experts.

[Yavin] The two institutes therefore more or less concur.

[Mish'al] That is correct, but we should note that in both polls Shim'on Peres has about 50 percent. In other words, that is the threshold he will have to cross to avoid a second round of elections.

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[Yavin] There is a large number who are still undecided.

[Mish'al] The undecided are very interesting because if 1 or 2 percent vote for Shim'on Peres, then he has the required majority to avoid a second round.

Four or five percent do not want to vote for either candidate.

[Yavin] Perhaps they support David Levi.

[Mish'al] That might be true of SHAS [Torah Observing Sephardim] voters. There is a different noteworthy phenomenon, the Likud-Tzomet alliance. Where did the 7 or 8 percent go that Refa'el Eytan would have received? According to the two pollsters, half went to Netanyahu — which is why the gap was reduced — and half joined the undecided group. In other words, it made the situation more complicated.

[Yavin] What is happening in Labor?

[Mish'al] Peres has decided to announce on Sunday [11 February] that there will be early elections. The prime minister met this evening with the party's campaign committee and he was convinced to make his announcement Sunday. [passage omitted]

Israel: Car Bomb Fears Prompt Restrictions on Entry of Palestinians

TA0902063496 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0500 GMT 9 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Private and commercial vehicles from the territories have been banned from entering Israel starting this morning after warnings were received of plans to carry out a terrorist attack, possibly through the use of a car bomb. Palestinians from the territories under the age of 30 are also prohibited from entering Jerusalem.

Israel: Settlers Blame U.S. Group as IDF Closes Hebron Market

TA0902113096 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 9 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] has declared the Palestinian wholesalers' market situated near Hebron's Avraham Avinu neighborhood a closed military zone.

Our correspondent Gil Litman reports that dozens of Palestinians demonstrated there this morning and were dispersed by IDF soldiers. Jewish settlers in Hebron claimed that the demonstration was organized by an American Christian organization that supports the Palestinians. The settlers demand that Israel deport the members of the American organization, asserting that they incite the Arabs against Jewish settlers in Hebron.

Israel: Bank Collapses Feared Over Kibbutz Debt Miscalculation

TA0802114696 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 8 Feb 96 p 8

[Report by Galit Lipkis Beck]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Agriculture Minister Ya'aqov Tzur and Internal Security Minister Moshe Shahal are demanding an official commission of inquiry into alleged kibbutz debts to the banks, after the Procaccia preliminary report, published yesterday, said banks inflated the debts.

Supervisor of Bank's Ze'ev Abeles denied reports that the banks are at risk of collapsing if mistakes are discovered in the bank's debt calculation.

The draft report said the commercial banks miscalculated charges to kibbutzim over many years and that correcting the mistakes will place doubt on the stability of the banking sector.

"An examination of the mistaken parameters included in the banks' accounts is likely to lead to surprising results," the report said. "These results are expected to differ from one kibbutz to another, but together the results are expected to cast doubt on the majority of the debt and indirectly threaten the stability of the banking system."

The report — which was written by Prof. Uri'el Procaccia, a specialist in legal issues, and attorney Ya'aqov Weinrot — places a strong emphasis on the legal parameters used to calculate the debts.

"We believe that at least some of these parameters are mistaken, and their correction is likely to lead to significant changes in the bottom line," the report said. "That is, in the size of kibbutz debts to the banks."

The examination was commissioned by the Kibbutz Headquarters, a private association set up to check kibbutz bank accounts. Procaccia is expected to publish a complete report at the end of the month.

Speaking on Israel Radio, Procaccia said the banking sector will not collapse as a result of the banks' alleged miscalculations, but the country's two largest banks will be faced with a problem.

Abeles said the kibbutz debts do not threaten the stability of the banks, which in their financial statements have already defined them as bad debts and accounted for them in the provisions for doubtful debts clause.

Total kibbutz debts to the banking sector are about NIS [New Israel Shekel] 15 billion.

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"Headlines in the press of risks that the banks will collapse do not at all reflect the reality," said Abeles. "Even if there is some truth to the claims (in the report), the banks have financial reserves to solve the problem if it arises. These reserves are like an absorbent pillow for possible future losses, and will reduce the possible future damage on the banks profitability."

Abeles emphasized that the Procaccia report is not complete and was commissioned by a body that is not objective. He advised the kibbutzim not to cancel the debt arrangement they have with the banks in order to check their accounts, since it is likely to lead to complete confusion. [passage omitted]

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Jordan: Prime Minister Receives U.S. Congressional Delegation

JN0802182496 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti this evening received a U.S. congressional delegation on a two-day visit to Jordan. During the visit, the delegation is expected to meet with senior Jordanian officials. Talks focused on the Middle East peace process and Jordan's active role in it. The two sides also reviewed the democratic march in Jordan, which is considered a model to be emulated in all countries of the region. They discussed bilateral relations and means to develop and reinforce these relations that are based on respect and cooperation.

The U.S. congressional delegation includes Senator Claiborne Pell, Senator Charles Robb, and Senator James Inhofe.

Jordan: Al-Kabariti Promises To Reinforce Parliament's Role

JN0902092496 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 8 Feb 96 pp 1, 7

[Report by Sa'idah Kilani]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al- Kabariti on Wednesday reaffirmed the government's commitment to respect and promote the role of Parliament and said the executive authority wanted to enhance cooperation with the legislature. "We will respect Parliament and we will work on reinforcing its role," Mr. al-Kabariti said. "We do not promise you that we will be able to achieve miracles, but we will maintain honesty, loyalty, the sense of belonging and respect for the House," he said in his first appearance before the Lower House of Parliament after assuming office as prime minister on Sunday. "Until the government wins the vote of confidence (it needs from the House), I will personally shoulder the task of following up on all responsibilities and duties that were raised in the letter of designation from His Majesty King Husayn," said Mr. al-Kabariti.

In the letter of designation, the King called on Mr. al-Kabariti's government to preserve and consolidate the unity of the nation, to enhance the country's progress towards democracy and responsible freedom and to make a review of the progress in general to achieve a comprehensive qualitative leap in the country's political, economic and social life.

The Lower House is expected to be convened for a vote of confidence session on the government in two weeks after the 'Eid al- Fitr feast. The vote will be drawn after the government presents its policy statement to the House.

There are 22 deputies who are also ministers in the Cabinet but Mr. al-Kabariti's government is likely to ensure an easy vote of confidence from the 80-member House, especially in view of the prime minister's promises to introduce radical and swift changes in the human rights situation in the Kingdom, observers said.

"I am very well aware that there is huge responsibility and heavy burdens (on the government)... but we are determined to go ahead and pursue our goals to win the confidence of the House," Mr. al- Kabariti said.

House Speaker Sa'd Hayil al-Surur congratulated Mr. al-Kabariti upon his appointment as prime minister and expressed hope that the government's policy statement will meet the House's expectations and aspirations. "We are looking forward for cooperation with the new government that will contribute to improving our performance and realise our aspirations..." Mr. al-Surur said. "This cooperation might be one of the best achievements of the new government."

Mr. al-Kabariti said in comments published on Wednesday that his government was keen to achieve Arab solidarity and enhance joint Arab action to enable the Arab Nation to counter challenges facing it. In an interview with the London-based AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT Arabic daily, Mr. al-Kabariti said his government was also keen to continue efforts aiming at improving Jordan's relations with all Arab and Islamic countries. Jordan's interest, the premier stressed, is in maintaining good relations with all countries, and particularly those neighbouring the Kingdom. He added that his government would also support the Middle East peace process in order to achieve a just, lasting and comprehensive peace on all tracks of Arab-Israeli peace negotiations.

In an interview with another London-based Arabic daily, AL-HAYAH, Mr. al-Kabariti said King Husayn entrusted him with bringing change that would include all the government's institutions and would remove obstacles impeding Jordan's development process. The government, he said, will work on preparing the necessary policies and mechanisms required by "the process of comprehensive change." It will also work on building new foundations governing relations between the executive authority and the civic society institutions, including Parliament, the press and the professional associations, he said.

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Jordan: New Ministers, Others Comment on al-Kabariti Cabinet

JN0902110196 Amman THE STAR in English 8-14 Feb 96 pp 1-2

[Report by Ra'id al-'Abid]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The speed with which Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti was able to form his first Government this week has surprised many. But more importantly it was the nature of his 31-member cabinet, comprising 22 deputies, technocrats and even figures known for their opposition of the peace treaty with Israel, that baffled observers. This was no ordinary Government by any standard and if anything, Mr. al-Kabariti's distinctive leadership style was evident.

"The important question is: What is my role in this Government," Dr. Kamal Nasir, the new Minister of Administrative Development told the THE STAR. "Mr. al-Kabariti agreed that he will give me a free hand to fight corruption. And he emphasized the notions of administrative reforms and man-power development," Dr. Nasir said. "I am happy with this assignment, and will work to find a mechanism to fight corruption, and prevent if from happening," he added. "Our main concern is local problems, more than external issues."

The independent pan-Arabist, who until his appointment was president of the Jordanian Lawyers Association, is also a member of the anti-normalization committee of the Professional Associations. "Our position from the peace treaty has no value now, since the treaty is already signed. During the last two cabinet meetings no minister talked about it," Dr. Nasir said. "Every minister has his agenda, the most important thing now, more important than talking about politics, is administrative development and I will be busy reviewing the ministry's success of the past year." Asked if he will be willing to meet with Israeli officials, Dr. Nasir said that he was part of this cabinet and head of a ministry. "We form one unit, there should be no problems there. It is early to talk about this, when it happens we shall see," he said.

Surprisingly, another opponent of the peace treaty also joined the new cabinet. Leftist deputy Mustafa Shunaykat was appointed Minister of Agriculture. How he feels about the Government's political agenda is still unknown.

"This cabinet has been given a difficult task by his majesty the king. It has been asked to carry out dramatic changes in almost every aspect of life in our country," said Ibrahim 'Izz-al-Din, a former deputy prime minister who resigned his post in the previous al-Sharif (Prince) Zayd Bin Shakir's Government. "There are many things that I would like to emphasize, like the necessity of reform of our educational system, and the stress on administrative reform," he told THE STAR. "The Government must activate the opportunities for investment and promote Jordan in a manner which would help to open up the country for meaningful investment. At the same time, emphasis must be placed on enhancing democracy in the country," he added.

Jordanian businessmen were happy with the emphasis in the royal letter of designation on the need to activate the role of the private sector in economic and political decisions. "We are comfortable with the new Prime Minister who comes from the private sector," said Hamdi al-Taba', chairman of the Jordanian Businessmen Association. "The cabinet ministers are experienced and should affect the process of economic reform. This should make our dialogue with the Government much easier."

The present Government has 22 deputies, five more than the previous one. Mr. 'Izz-al-Din considers this as "normal in a Parliamentary democracy." He added "governments in democratic countries usually come from parliaments, and the cabinet represents the main parties and blocs in Parliament. This should be coupled by giving a chance to the permanent secretaries to run their departments without interference from the minister."

The private sector was not happy with the number of deputies in the new cabinet, especially those who have no experience in economic affairs. "We would have preferred them to stay in Parliament to discuss and observe Government policy," said al-Taba'. "Is this Government, with its huge number of ministers, capable of being flexible and of moving fast on the economic issues?" he asked. "We fear that debate in the Prime Ministry will be endless because of the number of Cabinet members. This is something that delays the process of adopting economic decisions."

Mr. 'Izz-al-Din, who is considered a liberal and an advocate of press freedom called on the new Government to "give a direct message in relation to the freedom of the press and to open up the official media to the opposition and be forthcoming in its debate with political parties." He said such signals will create the right atmosphere for "a meaningful dialogue between political activists and the Government in the country."

Mr. al-Kabariti's Government will be judged by its position from administrative reform, the educational system and inviting investors among others. The Prime Minister has instructed his team to be accessible. During the first cabinet meeting this week, Mr. al- Kabariti called for a transparent Government where ministers

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and public officials are held accountable. Mr. 'Izz-al-din applauded such a directive.

The opposition has welcomed the new cabinet, while reiterating its rejection of the peace treaty with Israel. The Muslim Brotherhood refused to join the Government, but said that its members will cooperate with any government that respects public liberties and Shura. "We rejected the participation as we believe that the present era is based on cooperating with the Jewish enemy," said 'Abd-al-Majid al-Thunaybat, the overseer of the Muslim Brotherhood movement in Jordan. "There is no difference between this Government and the previous one—it might succeed in some fields, but there are important issues like unemployment, poverty, economic crises and public liberties, which we hope this government will address."

Mr. Salim al-Nahas, the general secretary of the leftist Hashd party, was more blunt. "This Government was expected. The decision-makers discovered that there is a barrier between the people and the peace treaty, at a time when the treaty has become the cornerstone of the political system." Al-Nahas, whose party faces legal charges of affiliation to a foreign party, that "this why the leadership found no alternative but to turn its back to the old guard and seek younger politicians who will carry on with normalization." Criticizing the two opposition figures whom al-Kabariti was able to win over to this team, al-Nahas said that by joining the Government and adhering to its program, they have ceased to be members of the opposition.

The General Secretary of the Jordanian Women's Union, Lawyer Asma Khadir said "the policies of the state are basically the same. The policy towards Iraq, the implementation of the peace treaty and the reconciliation with the Gulf states should continue under the al- Kabariti Government." she said. But in her view, the structure of the cabinet was designed so that the public could let off steam. "But the crises will erupt again, especially concerning democratic freedoms," Khadir said. She expressed her doubts about the Government's ability to deliver, describing it as a Government of deputies who became ministers, rather than a Parliamentary Government.

Jordan: Poll Shows Parties Oppose 1-Person, 1-Vote Law

JN0902090096 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 8 Feb 96 pp 1, 7

[Report by Sa'idah Kilani]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—Jordan political parties believe that the one-person, one vote law should be eliminated and a new law based on proportional representation should be promulgated, an opinion poll has found.

The poll carried out by the Al-Urdun al-Jadid [The New Jordan] Research Centre on the 23 political parties in the Kingdom showed that parties, representing the different political trends, prefer a completely different election law than the one person, one vote law that was introduced in 1993.

The study also showed that 86 per cent of the parties want the voting age be reduced from 19 to 18. The same percentage believes that voters should not vote as illiterates if they can write and read.

The poll, whose results were released at a press conference on Wednesday, revealed that 77 per cent of the parties in the Kingdom are against the allocation of a quota for women in Parliament. The quota specified for minorities in the current law should be eliminated, according to 50 per cent of the parties.

A high majority of the parties, 77 per cent, sees that the Ministry of Interior should not oversee the election procedures. Instead, they believe that another authority should be responsible for the task. There was no specification put in the questionnaires, but 81 per cent of the parties agreed to the formation of a special court to look into cases filed by citizens contesting the results of the elections.

Fifty-nine per cent of the parties want the number of seats in the Lower House to be raised to 100 from 80 and 68 per cent want to preserve the minimum age eligible for candidates at 30 years.

The study was conducted in May 1995, It was aimed at "bringing into light the Jordanian parties' aspirations and expectations of a new election law," said Hani al-Hurani, the centre's director. "There is a unanimous rejection to the current law."

A draft election law prepared by the previous government was not officially presented to the Lower House for discussion included some of the changes that political parties called for but it was based on the one-person, one vote law. The draft has been shelved.

In consultations with parliamentarians last week before the announcement of the new government, Prime Minister 'Abd al-Karim al- Kabariti stressed that a new election law would be introduced. He said it will be based on the ideas and aspirations of the Jordanian people and it will not be officially presented before the conclusion of a national debate on the issue.

Mr. al-Kabariti said it was one of the priorities of the Kingdom and that it will be also one of its achievements.

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Jordan: Daily Rejects Misinterpretations of Stance on Iraq

JN0902113896 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 9 Feb 96 pp 1, 18

[Editorial: "Misinterpreting the Jordanian Position on Iraq"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Despite a series of consecutive explanations, it seems that some still want to interpret the Jordanian position on the situation in Iraq in the way they like and in the manner that serves the policies of their countries on this crisis which erupted five years ago. It could be useful — amid the rush of foreign statements dealing with Jordan's position on Iraq according to whims that have nothing to do with us — to reiterate that this Arab country, which stood by the Iraqi people in their prolonged ordeal, still has faith in Iraq's territorial integrity. This country also rejects any position that would undermine the sovereignty of sisterly Iraq on its territory.

We in Jordan do not need to clarify that we support lifting the embargo against the Iraqi people. This has been our position for a long time, and not only in this period in which Iraq is negotiating with the United Nations on a partial lifting of the embargo. Among all the Arab peoples, we in Jordan have always been the most sympathetic toward the children and women of sisterly Iraq.

We were the first to realize that the five-year old embargo was directed against the people more than against the ruling system in Baghdad. We have also realized that those who suffer and feel the pain of the embargo's horrors far more than the system's figures in Baghdad are Iraq's children and women who lack milk and medicine and suffer from diseases and food shortage.

In light of all this, Jordan does not need to clarify or reiterate its position vis-a-vis this human tragedy plaguing the brothers in Iraq. Jordan supports and encourages any position or arrangement that will assuage the pains of the Iraqi brethren and put an end to their suffering which has been extremely prolonged.

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Lebanon: Al-Hariri Says Country To Benefit From Peace

NC0902100496 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0530 GMT 9 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] President Ilyas al-Hirawi, Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri, and Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri held a 45-minute meeting at the B'abda Palace yesterday after Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' concluded his visit. The meeting assessed the results of this visit. [passage omitted]

Prime Minister al-Hariri stressed that all parties have a desire to continue the peace process despite early Israeli elections. He emphasized that if peace is established, Lebanon will benefit from it because peace is better than war and the state of no war, no peace. He noted that peace will create new and big challenges. [passage omitted] He said:

[Begin al-Hariri recording] Regarding the peace negotiations, as you know, Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' visited Lebanon today. He briefed us on talks between the Americans and the Syrians regarding the Syrian-Israeli track. It seems that agreement was reached to resume negotiations on 26 February, which shows that all parties have a desire to complete the peace process, despite the early Israeli elections. Clearly, the Americans were concerned that the early elections in Israel must not affect the negotiations. The fact that the Syrians agreed to continue talks means that the momentum [last word in English] of the negotiations is continuing. As for Lebanon, our goals and course are clear: We call for implementing Security Council resolution 425. We and our Syrian brothers fully agreed on the need for the Syrian and Lebanese tracks to go in tandem. Time has shown that this policy serves the interests of both Lebanon and Syria, because any unilateral deal by either country will be at the expense of the other. We, all the people of Lebanon, realize the significance of continuing the peace process and reaching its natural goal, namely, Israeli withdrawal from all Lebanese territory and achieving a comprehensive solution to the Israeli occupation of south Lebanon and the Golan heights. There is no doubt that Lebanon will benefit from peace, if it is established, because peace is better than war and the state of no war, no peace. We all realize that peace will create new and big challenges. Lebanon is capable of meeting these challenges. Lebanon is fully aware of the problems it will face and is preparing to face them. [passage omitted] [end recording]

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Syria: 2nd Batch of Japanese Golan Observers Arrives

JN0802215296 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 8 Feb 96

[Announcer-read report over video]

[FBIS Translated Text] The deployment of the Japanese unit that will be part of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force [UNDOF] on the occupied Golan has been completed with the arrival of the second batch of observers today. More details are contained in the following report:

[Begin recording] [Unidentified correspondent] Dear viewers: The second batch of the Japanese observers that will join the international troops stationed on the Golan arrived this evening. With the arrival of this batch, the number of Japanese observers totals 45. They will be part of the disengagement force on the occupied Golan. The batch was welcomed upon arrival by Brigadier General Fawzi Darwish, head of the Syrian side to the joint armistice commission; Japanese Ambassador in Damascus Mr. (Oshida); and UNDOF Commander General (Yohannes Costras).

Brig. Gen. Fawzi Darwish delivered a speech welcoming the second batch of Japanese observers and wishing them good stay in Syria. He indicated that the Japanese involvement in this endeavor will promote relations between our two governments and peoples. Moreover, this will also enhance cooperation and understanding between the UNDOF and the Syrian Government.

Then, Gen. (Yohannes Costras) delivered a speech, in which he thanked the Japanese Government for sending the Japanese unit. He hoped that this unit will play its role in full.

For his part, Japanese Ambassador in Damascus Mr. (Oshida) spoke about the Japanese involvement with the UNDOF on the Golan, reiterating his trust that the Japanese unit will represent Japan and UN forces in the best possible manner.

This batch will leave for its field of operations on the Golan Heights tomorrow to play its role within the international observer force operating there.

On this occasion, UNDOF Commander Gen. (Johannes Costras) spoke to a television news team, saying:

[Costras, in English with superimposed Arabic translation] This is the second batch of Japanese observers who will be part of the UNDOF. Right now, we have 45 Japanese personnel. So, we now have four battalions in active service, namely, the Polish Battalion, the Canadian Battalion, the Austrian Battalion, and the Japanese Battalion. I am happy that Japan is getting involved with the UNDOF. This is because the increase in the number of the countries involved with the UNDOF reflects greater international interest in the peace process. [end recording]

Syria: Press on Stand With Lebanon, Upcoming Maryland Talks

JN0902074596 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0550 GMT 9 Feb 96

[Press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] Under the headline "Unified Syrian-Lebanese Position Stronger Than Ever," AL-BA'TH says: All forms of pressure used by Israel against Lebanon have not succeeded in making it budge an inch from its honorable stance toward the peace process. If this is the case, can any other forms of pressure enable Israel to split the Syrian and Lebanese tracks?

The paper adds: Coordination and consultation among the concerned Arab parties at the Madrid conference amounted to a very strong bargaining chip and a source of strength. This did not enable the Israelis to go too far in imposing their conditions and in derailing the peace process. The unified Syrian-Lebanese position seeks to maintain this source of strength and invulnerability. The two fraternal countries are determined to achieve a just peace together.

The paper adds: This unified position rests on some central considerations known to all honest people and to those who care about the interests of the people and the homeland. This position has confused Israel and prompted it to use all methods in a bid to undermine the inseparable Syrian and Lebanese tracks.

AL-BA'TH concludes that the unified position of Syria and Lebanon remains stronger. This unified position is a trump card for both countries and for the Arab nation as a whole.

In one of its commentaries, AL-THAWRAH speaks about the Maryland talks on the Syrian-Israeli track. The talks did not achieve the progress that was hoped for in spite of the great halo of optimism that surrounded them. The reason for this is Israel's refusal to respond to the requirements and foundations of peace: full Israeli withdrawal from the Golan and southern Lebanon, as stipulated by the resolutions of international legitimacy and the land-for-peace U.S. principle.

The paper asserts that Syria's position on peace is clear and firm. Syria called for a just and comprehensive peace based on full Israeli withdrawal from the Golan to the 4 June 1967 lines. Syria is not asking for anything

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more than the implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions and the U.S. initiative, which paved the way for the convening of the Madrid conference.

AL-THAWRAH adds: We in Syria are for a just and comprehensive peace. We are working seriously and honesty to make peace efforts succeed. Everybody knows that Syria provided many opportunities and initiatives every time Israel led the peace process to a dead end, to enable the peace process to achieve a breakthrough. Syria proved this once again to U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher when it responded to the U.S. desire and gave another opportunity to this process by agreeing to resume the Maryland talks late February, as the U.S. secretary of state announced.

AL-THAWRAH concludes: Pending the upcoming Maryland round of talks, the commitment of U.S. officials, led by President Clinton and U.S. Secretary of State Christopher, to supporting the peace process and establishing a just and comprehensive peace, remains the hope and guarantee. We hope the U.S. role in the upcoming talks will go beyond promises to actions to make Israel commit itself to the logic of peace.

In another commentary, AL-THAWRAH says: Syria has done a great deal for peace and has spared no effort for it. The world acknowledged this and the U.S. sponsor appreciated it. Syria wants the dream of peace to become a reality so the region can enjoy security and stability. Syria has also fully responded to, and cooperated with U.S. efforts.

The paper adds: Syria renews its commitment to peace and to continuing the peace process under the Madrid conditions, the resolutions of international legitimacy, and the return of the land and rights in full in the Golan and southern Lebanon. Syria also emphasizes the role and responsibility of the U.S. sponsor toward peace. There is still great hope that the United States will activate its role to fulfill the pledges and guarantees, expressed recently by President Clinton in his letter to President Hafiz al- Asad. The purpose of this is to commit the Israeli side to the peace of international legitimacy and make it surrender rights in full to their owners. This is the path toward peace.

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Afghanistan

Afghanistan: U.S. Delegation Visits for Talks With Taleban

LD0802220396 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Dari to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A U.S. delegation headed by the deputy chief of mission in Islamabad has visited Qandahar. According to news reports, the U.S. delegation comprising Mr. Holzman, America's deputy chief of mission in Islamabad, and Richard Smith, U.S. consul in Peshawar, had earlier visited Kabul and held talks with Ahmad Shah Mas'ud and Najibollah Lafra'i, acting foreign minister of the coalition administration. The report says that the same delegation has now visited Qandahar to meet with the Taleban. It has been said in connection with the delegation's visits to Jalalabad, Qandahar, and Kabul that they are apparently aimed at collecting information on the situation. However, their true objectives have not yet become clear.

Afghanistan: Foreign Secretary Reports 'Some Progress' in Talks

BK0802130196 Hong Kong AFP in English 1239 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ISLAMABAD, Feb 8 (AFP) — Pakistan reported "progress" after renewed diplomatic efforts aimed at to the Afghan civil war started here Thursday, with the participation of a senior Iranian diplomat and a key Afghan factional leader. Pakistani Foreign Secretary Najmuddin Sheikh told reporters "some progress" was made toward finding a solution to the Afghan conflict. "I do not say that there is an air of optimism but slowly there was some progress," he said.

Sheikh met the visiting Uzbek general 'Abdol Rashid Dostam, who controls much of northern Afghanistan. He also spoke with Iranian deputy foreign minister 'Ala'eddin Borujerdi, who arrived in Islamabad after talks with senior government officials in the Kabul. Sheik said his talks with Borujerdi focussed on "how far there is readiness among Afghan leaders to move towards the idea of formation of a broad-based government acceptable to all Afghan ethnic groups and parties."

Iran wants a rapprochement between Afghan President Borhanoddin Rabbani and his opposition to prevent renewed fighting. It has also been trying to resolve differences between Kabul and the Pakistan government. Sheikh quoted Borujerdi as saying that his talks in Kabul and Jalalabad with Afghan leaders were partly useful while "some elements" still needed to be thrashed out in detail.

It was not known whether former Afghan prime minister Golboddin Hekmatyar, who heads Hezb-e Eslami party, was among the leaders whom the Iranian diplomat met in Jalalabad. On Thursday, UN special envoy Mahmoud Mestiri left for Jalalabad for talks with Hekmatyar, UN and Pakistani sources said.

A spokesman for Dostam's National Islamic Movement (NIM) said that Dostam would also call on Pakistani President Farooq Ahmad Leghari and Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto. NIM spokesman general Painda Khan described Dostam's mission as "important, " and told AFP its purpose was to find a peaceful settlement to the Afghan conflict.

Stressing the visit was at the invitation of the Pakistani government, he said Dostam's trip was linked to Islamabad's effort to peacefully resolve the nearly four-year civil war and that he "will stay as long as necessary." Dostam will discuss peace prospects with other Afghan leaders, including senior officials of the Supreme Coordination Council of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (SCCIRA).

The four-party opposition coalition SCCIRA, which includes Dostam's faction, has been pressing for Rabbani to resign, which they say would pave the way for a negotiated settlement of the Afghan crisis.

NIM officials did not rule out a meeting between Dostam and representatives of the Taleban Islamic militia which has been besieging Kabul for the past four months. The Taleban leaders and Dostam's party officials have in the past held inconclusive talks on forging a military alliance against Rabbani. The NIM spokesman said mutual cooperation was possible as "we are both in opposition and have a common goal" of ousting Rabbani.

Afghanistan: Sheikh, Borujerdi, Dostam View Peace Talks

BK0802152396 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 8 Feb 96

[Passages in italics recorded]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Hectic diplomatic activities began in Islamabad today in order to settle the Afghanistan crisis entailing the establishment of a broad-based government in Afghanistan aimed at ending bloodshed in the war-torn country. Key figures in the Afghanistan crisis — Pakistan, Iran, and Afghan leaders — were busy holding parleys with each other on bilateral basis.

The first round of talks was held between Foreign Secretary Mr. Najmuddin Sheikh and Deputy Foreign Minister of Iran 'Ala'eddin Borujerdi. Mr. Borujerdi

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flew into Islamabad from Kabul this morning after his talks with Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani of Kabul regime. He also visited Jalalabad and held negotiations with Engineer Golboddin Hekmatyar and Mowlawi Yunes Khales.

Later, Rashid Dostam, who is leading a delegation of Afghan opposition leaders, had a separate meeting with the foreign secretary. Other leaders of the delegation, which included Deputy Leader of Hezb-e Wahdat-Khalili (Ostad Mohaqqiq) and Dr. (Sadeq Najibollah Mosabbir) of Harakat-e Eslami-(Mosabbir) Group also attended the meeting.

PTV correspondent Azhar Mas'ud reports that after having talks with Foreign Secretary Najmuddin Sheikh, the Iranian deputy foreign minister, 'Ala'eddin Borujerdi, held separate meetings with 'Abdol Rashid Dostam and members of his delegation at the Iranian Embassy. Commenting on today's activity, Foreign Secretary Mr. Najmuddin Sheikh told our correspondent:

[Sheikh] *In my discussions with the deputy minister, His Excellency Mr. Borujerdi, he briefed me on recent meetings that he has had in Afghanistan, both in Kabul with the representatives of the Kabul regime and subsequently in Jalalabad with other Afghan leaders. He thinks that there are proposals that have been put forward, which may be helpful toward arriving at a solution. We are examining those proposals. We are taking a look at what can be done to facilitate such other proposals as are practicable as will help to arrive at a solution.*

My other meeting has been with General Dostam and a number of other members of his delegation, who by and large between them represented much of northern Afghanistan. We have discussed with them various ideas on how further bloodshed can be avoided, how peace can be brought to Afghanistan, and how the solution would lie in a broad-based government. Such an interim government could take control in Kabul, could take control of the country, and then sit together to frame a new constitution, and use the traditional Afghan methods, perhaps the Loya Jergah [Grand Assembly] or elections or any other method that the Afghans themselves decide upon, in order to set down a permanent system for durable government and durable peace and stability in Afghanistan.

Deputy Foreign Minister of Iran, Mr. 'Ala'eddin Borujerdi termed negotiations as the best substitute for civil strife in Afghanistan. He said:

[Borujerdi, in Persian with passage by passage translation into English] *And at the present time we do have different groups at negotiations at the moment. We do believe that if we would be having the negotiations as a substitute for the war would be the best choice; especially that we have had the official pronouncement of the transfer of power from Mr. Rabbani. And during my visit to Jalalabad also, the main topic of the discussions was as to whom this power should be transferred.*

Rashid Dostam, while admitting Pakistan's positive role during 11 [as heard] years of Afghan war and Pakistan's present role as a mediator said:

[Dostam, in unidentified language with superimposed translation into English] *The Afghan nation will never forget the fullest support of Pakistani brothers during the 14 years' jehad days and revolution of Afghanistan. Pakistani brothers fully supported us and [words indistinct] they were on us. Every Afghan can never forget this and I know, I am sure that honestly Pakistan would like that peace should come within Afghanistan and they would like to have good relations with Afghanistan.*

Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mr. 'Ala'eddin Borujerdi held an hour-long meeting with Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto at the Prime Minister's House in Islamabad today. Later, talking to PTV, Mr. Borujerdi said that he gave a complete briefing to Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto on Iranian efforts for a peaceful settlement in Afghanistan. He said that he gave a resume to Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto on his meeting with Prof. Borhanoddin Rabbani held in Kabul.

Afghanistan: Iran's Borujerdi Holds Talks With Hekmatyar

LD0802221196 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Dari to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Ala'eddin Borujerdi, deputy foreign minister of Iran, has begun his second round of efforts in connection with the situation in Afghanistan. [passage omitted]

In Jalabad city today Ala'eddin Borujerdi held talks with Brother [Golboddin] Hekmatyar, leader of the Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party] of Afghanistan, on the settlement of the crisis in the country.

Afghanistan: Iranian Minister Confident of Solution to Crisis

BK0902031496 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 9 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister 'Ala'eddin Borujerdi has expressed confidence that a permanent solution to the Afghan crisis will be found soon, as Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani has agreed to relinquish power. Addressing a news conference in Peshawar last night, he said that he held talks with almost all factions, except the Taleban, to create a mechanism

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for the future setup of Afghanistan and to determine the future shape of the government. He appreciated the Pakistani Government's efforts to achieve a resolution of the Afghan issue and said that his current visit to Pakistan is a continuation of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's visit to Iran. He added that an attempt is being made to find a resolution of the Afghan issue through consensus. He said that reconciliation between Pakistan and Afghanistan was discussed during his visit.

In reply to a question, the Iranian deputy foreign minister said that all Afghan factions want a solution to the Afghan issue without any further delay. He said that relations between Pakistan and Iran are time-tested and will be strengthened further in the future.

Afghanistan: 10 Rockets Fired Into Kabul

LD0802151596 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Dari 1430 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Eight Kabul residents have been injured as a result of 10 rockets fired by Benazir Bhutto's Taleban. The BAKHTAR agency reported that the residential areas of Kabul city were last night targeted by 10 rockets fired by the Taleban, as a result of which eight Kabul residents were injured and one house was damaged.

Afghanistan: 13 Casualties Reported in Taleban Clashes

LD0802210096 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Thirteen people were killed and wounded yesterday in Ghazni Province as a result of heavy clashes between two Taleban groups.

According to a report by BAKHTAR, quoting eyewitnesses, clashes lasting two hours began in [word indistinct] area of Ghazni Province yesterday between two commanders. During these clashes, the reason for which has not become clear yet, 13 people from both sides were killed or wounded.

Afghanistan: Taleban Preparing Defense of Herat, Nimroz Provinces

LD0802152396 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Reports reaching Radio Message of Freedom indicate that the Taleban group has begun gathering people in Herat and Nimroz Provinces. The reports say that the Taleban group has recently begun gathering local people for the defense of Herat and Nimroz Provinces. The reports add that the Taleban group have done so in order to prevent unexpected attacks by the armed supporters of the Kabul administration based in Iran.

Afghanistan: Hezb-e Eslami Reopens Jalalabad-Kabul Highway

LD0802220896 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Dari to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Jalalabad-Kabul supply route has reopened to traffic with the cooperation of the Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party] of Afghanistan.

According to reports from news sources, the Jalalabad-Kabul supply route, which had been closed for some time to traffic carrying foodstuffs to the besieged city of Kabul, was reopened yesterday by the security authorities of the Hezb-e Eslami-ye Afghanistan. The reports add that with the reopening of the route a large number of trucks carrying foodstuffs and fuel arrived in Kabul city. Reports from Kabul city indicate that with the arrival of the above-mentioned trucks, the price of foodstuffs has come down and people's problems have decreased to some extent.

Bangladesh

Bangladesh: Zia Says No One Will Be Allowed To Foil Elections

BK0802144396 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in Bengali 1215 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Khaleda Zia called on voters to judiciously cast their votes in favor of candidates of their choice during the next general elections. On the last day of her tour to Feni today, she addressed public meetings at different places in the district including Musuriganj, Darogah Hat, Chhagalnaiya Thana Sadar, Bokhtar Hat, Amjad Hat, [name indistinct], Parshuram Thana Sadar, Fulgazi Thana Sadar, old Munshir Hat, and [name indistinct]. The prime minister said no one will be allowed to foil the elections by resorting to violence and destructive activities and added that voters can cast their votes without fear or intimidation.

Criticizing the destructive activities of some opposition parties aimed at obstructing elections, she said the opposition parties are not agitating for a caretaker government but want to impose illegal rule, since they know that they cannot win the elections. Referring to the implementation of development projects by her government during its five years of rule, Begum Zia said that no government of the past can compare their development programs with the development programs of the present government. Our correspondent reports

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that, among others, Mahbubul Alam Tara, former whip of the Parliament, and the minister for works attended these meetings with the prime minister.

Bangladesh: Commissioner Says 'No Scope to Canceling Elections'

BK0802144196 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in Bengali 1215 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The chief election commissioner has called on all concerned to be firmly resolved to maintaining peace, discipline, and a congenial atmosphere before and during parliamentary elections to be held next Thursday. Addressing senior officials of Rajshahi Division in Rajshahi this afternoon, Justice A.K.M. Sadeque said it is the duty of the election commissioner to hold elections in accordance with the Constitution. He said all the provisions of the Constitution are obligatory and no interpretation of these provisions can be made. He directed the officials to perform their election duty strictly and with total neutrality, and advised them to display maximum restraint and extend cooperation to voters and candidates. He said it is our duty to hold free, fair, and impartial elections. The objective is not to help the government or any particular person. We do not at all need to take into consideration who or which party is in power.

The chief election commissioner reiterated that there is no scope to canceling elections. If elections are canceled, a situation so critical will be created that it cannot be imagined by any healthy person. It will not only cause irreparable loss to the democratic process, but will pose a threat to the independence and sovereignty of the country. Justice Sadeque said the nation and our well-wishers abroad will justifiably hold us responsible for such a situation.

All preparations for the free, fair, and impartial holding of the forthcoming parliamentary elections have been finalized. A total of 41 political parties, alliances, and independent candidates are participating in the elections. Parties and alliances which have fielded 30 or more candidates are being given the opportunity to project their political statements and manifestos on radio and television. With this objective, 11 parties and alliances will express their opinions on radio and television. This program begins today and will continue until 12 February. Broadcasting of these statements will be from 1830 to 1900 hours, with each statement lasting 15 minutes. These parties and alliances include the Bangladesh Nationalist Party, BNP; Seven Party Alliance; Freedom Party-Faruq; Bangladesh Khelafat Andolon; National Democratic Alliance, NDA; Bangladesh Muslim League-Jamir Ali; National Democratic Party, NDP; Progotishil Gonotantrik Shakti, PROGOSH; Janadal; Jatiya Nagorik Sanghati; and Bangladesh Jana Adikhar Front. Leaders of the Janadal, Jatiya Nagorik Sanghati, and Bangladesh Jana Adikhar Front will hold their election statements and party manifestos on radio and television at 1830 this evening. To facilitate the broadcast of election statements, the local news of Radio Bangladesh will be broadcast at 1930 instead of 1900 beginning today until 12 February.

Bangladesh: Editorial Urges End to Election-Related Violence

BK0802140296 Dhaka THE MORNING SUN in English 5 Feb 96 p 4

[Editorial: "Pre-Poll Violence"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] These days newspaper pages are littered with reports of pre-poll violence which is not conducive to the healthy growth of democratic tradition. As one goes through newspapers in the morning, one is confronted with reports of hot chase given to candidates contesting the ensuing election, of anti-poll activists clashing with pro-poll elements, of burning transports of the candidates and so on and so forth.

Bombs are being thrown on election meetings and processions, candidates are being beaten and their transports are being damaged. Prime minister's election schedules are being disturbed. Wherever she is going in connection with her election programme, the anti-poll parties are declaring hartal [strike] there to disrupt her programme.

The situation is turning increasingly complicated with opposition parties planning greater violence in days ahead to resist the holding of election on February 15. In their attempt to prevent polling the opposition parties are planning nationwide hartal on the election day. On the hartal they are likely to unleash all their disruptive energies to frighten people from coming out to cast their votes. Under such a circumstance the government is certain to take all possible security measures to stop anti-poll parties from sabotaging the election. But that will be no consolation to voters. When both sides are strong enough to match each other, there is bound to be violence. In such an event common voters will not like to be cannon-fodders.

How to contain the pre-poll violence is also the responsibility of the Election Commission? It is relevant to ask the Election Commission as to what has been done to maintain constant vigil so that violence is not committed by any quarter. Democracy cannot be institutionalised if it turns into mobocracy. And this is what is happening in the name of democracy. Perhaps the political elements have forgotten the sacrifices of our people for

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the restoration of democratic polity in 1990 after relentless struggle for long nine year's against the autocratic regime.

Sanity should prevail in the political arena. Otherwise the pillars of democracy will crumble and none will come forward to salvage the sinking ship. It is in the prime interest of the people that democracy prospers and flourishes in this developing country. Those indulging in pre-poll violence must be boycotted by the people and identified as enemies of democracy. All efforts must be made to ensure peace before and after the polls.

At any rate, whatever is going to happen or is likely to happen is not going to set a good precedent for sound and healthy democratic polity in this country. In view of such possibilities it would be in the interest of both the government and the opposition parties boycotting the poll to sit across the table and work out a modus vivendi. In a democratic politics power politics is inevitable. But power politics should not take precedence over national interest. If one-party poll is a farce, carrying fight to a national jeopardy is far worse.

India

India: Samata Party Leader Resigns in Money Transfer Case

BK0802153096 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The senior Samata Party leader, Mr. Chandrajit Yadav, has resigned from the Lok Sabha on the hawala [illegal money transfer] issue. Talking to newspersons in New Delhi today he accepted that he has received 50,000 rupees from Jain brothers to fight the last parliamentary elections.

The former union minister, Mr. Kalpanath Rai, today denied any link with the hard-core terrorist gang of Dawood Ibrahim. In a statement in New Delhi today, he said the charges of his links with the main accused in the Bombay blast case is politically motivated. He also alleged that he had been implicated in the Jain hawala case without any cogent evidence.

Meanwhile, the left parties today held a demonstration in the capital demanding resignation of all the political leaders involved in the hawala case.

India: Rao Stresses Need to Normalize Ties With Pakistan

BK0802160396 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The prime minister said that India and Pakistan should not take inflexible or unreasonable postures and keep contact at various levels to find solutions to all outstanding problems. Mr. Narasimha Rao conveyed this to the former Pakistan foreign minister, Sahabzada Yaqub Khan, when he called on him in New Delhi today. He said that no opportunity should be lost to bring about normalization of relations between the two countries.

Mr. Yaqub Khan said that stronger commercial ties as envisaged under the South Asia Preferential Trade Agreement and greater exchange of publications and information will pave the way for better understanding between the two countries.

India: 4 Afghan Mercenaries Killed in Kashmir

BK0802160596 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In the Kashmir valley, security forces recovered 54 deadly rockets and 11 boxes containing 1,000 rounds of ammunition in Kupwara after a fierce encounter with the militants yesterday. According to an official spokesman, four Afghan mercenaries were killed in the encounter which lasted more than 12 hours. Three AK-type rifles, two pistols, and a large quantity of ammunition were also recovered.

India: Engineering Exports Increase by 24% in 6 Months

BK0902051896 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1530 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Exports from the engineering sector have shown a remarkable increase. They grew by 24 percent in dollar terms in the first six months of the current year itself. A report from our correspondent Madhu Nag.

[Begin recording] [Nag] Exports have assumed a crucial role in the Indian economy in the postliberalization period. Exports from the engineering sector, which has a 12 percent share consisting of value-added products, have been showing a commendable increase over the past two years. The Engineering Export Promotion Council, which plays a vital role in helping the exporters, presented the all-India award for export excellence at a function in New Delhi. Eighty-seven companies were awarded trophies and certificates for the year in different product categories by the minister of state for commerce, Mr. P. Chidambaram.

Speaking on the occasion, the minister complimented the export promotion council for its catalytic role and the assistance provided to the exporters of the engineering industry. The commerce minister advised the exporters to concentrate their efforts in developing their ties with the Asian markets, as they pose greater promise

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than the western markets for the future. The chairman of the promotion council, Mr. P.K. Shah, outlined the need for quality management and technological upgradation of Indian exporters to meet the international competitiveness:

[Shah] We are hopeful for achieving 24 to 25 percent growth over last year. On the technical position, we are already ahead; most of our (?engineering) units are going for quality product manufacturing.

[Nag] The very fact that more than 550 firms in the engineering industry have acquired ISO 9000 certification, [words indistinct] in this direction. [end recording]

Iran

Iran: Report on Rafsanjani Remarks to Foreign Diplomats

NC0902091196 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 9 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] On the eve of 22 Bahman [11 February], the anniversary of the victory of the spectacular Islamic Revolution of Iran, ambassadors and heads of foreign diplomatic delegations in Tehran were received by President Hashemi-Rafsanjani to extend congratulations on the commencement of the 18th anniversary of the establishment and rule of the Islamic system in Iran.

The Central News Unit reports that during this meeting, the ambassador of the Syrian Arab Republic in Iran, acting as the doyen of the ambassadors, spoke on behalf of the other foreign diplomats in Iran. Extending congratulations to the esteemed leader of the revolution, the president, and the heroic Iranian nation on the anniversary of the victory of the Islamic Revolution, he said: Despite the imposition of numerous problems by the enemies of the Islamic Revolution and the imposition of a long war on this country, the Iranian nation's extensive and unexpected steps toward reconstruction and rapid growth in all fields are laudable and awe- inspiring. The Syrian ambassador said: The Islamic Republic of Iran is among the front-runners of the decisive combat against terrorism and is itself a victim of this dangerous phenomenon.

During the meeting, President Hashemi-Rafsanjani analyzed the Islamic Republic of Iran's political-economic and scientific- cultural situation and stressed: Iran's foreign policy is based on friendship with all the countries of the world, excluding America and Israel, and we welcome any country that wants to expand cooperation with Iran in the various political, economic, commercial, scientific, and cultural fields.

Stating the reasons why Iran does not officially recognize the Zionist regime and does not have relations with America, the president clarified: Israel is an illegitimate regime. The Islamic Republic of Iran condemns this regime's bullying and tyrannical acts and does not recognize it in any way. He added: The continuation of America's hostile policies and acts against the Islamic system, its improper behavior toward the world of Islam, its bullying stands, and its unsparing support for the Zionist regime are among the obstacles that affect Iranian-American relations.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani added: The policy of nonintervention in others' affairs is among the basic and fundamental principles of the Islamic Republic's foreign policy. The president said: Despite the enemies' extensive negative propaganda about Iran's efforts to export the revolution to other countries by interfering in their affairs, we deeply believe that the Islamic Revolution's principled thoughts and stands have many supporters among the nations, especially in the Third World, and that this does not mean intervention in others' affairs.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani underlined the priority that Iran's foreign policy gives to the expansion of relations with Islamic and neighboring countries and stated: We believe that talks held in a friendly and peaceful atmosphere constitute the best way to solve regional differences and will prevent minor problems and differences from being transformed into violent and spiteful confrontations.

In another part of his remarks, Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani described Iran's economic situation as very good and said that the approval of next [Iranian] year's [starting 21 March 1996] 137-trillion rial budget without a budget deficit is among the successes scored by the system in the economic field. He said: In view of its strong economic capability and the increase in its gross national product and exports, Iran has the healthiest foreign trade and is easily able to repay its foreign debts on time.

Referring to the great number of reconstruction steps in the country, especially after the conclusion of the imposed war, the president stated: Thanks to the training of expert domestic forces, the Islamic Republic of Iran is now able to implement the largest and most complicated industrial infrastructural projects such as refineries, power plants, dams, and other industrial plants. Thus, in addition to meeting its own needs and saving astronomical amounts in foreign exchange, it has also been able to export.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani referred to the implementation of the pressurized irrigation project and the extensive program for more scientific use of water resources

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as a successful program in Iran's agricultural sector and expressed our country's readiness to transfer its experiences in this field to other interested countries.

The president described the progress that Iran has achieved in manufacturing its own defense needs as extremely spectacular and stated: By ensuring a major share of its defense needs at home, Iran has no need to purchase arms from other countries and is even using the high capacity of its military industries to manufacture consumer goods and for development projects. He clarified: Iran holds military exercises in the Persian Gulf because of America's illegitimate presence in the region, and the strengthening of the defense structure never means the threatening of other countries. The Islamic Republic of Iran always displays good will and friendly approaches, and it expresses its wishes for goodneighborly relations and peaceful coexistence among nations.

Iran: Christopher Achieves 'No Success' From Mideast Tour

LD0802223596 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1530 GMT 8 Feb 96

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher has concluded his 17th diplomatic visit to the Middle East. In this round of the U.S. secretary of state's shuttle diplomacy he consulted the leaders of Syria and the occupied Palestine. In the final stage of his visit to the region Christopher also met with Yasir 'Arafat.

According to analysts, as was predictable, Christopher failed to win significant achievements in this visit. In fact what was brought up in this visit as progress in the recent Damascus-Tel Aviv talks just included continuation of talks and the future session of the Syrian-Israeli delegations on 26 February in Maryland, the United States. In this manner, once again, despite all the propaganda hue and cry concerning the emergence of a development in the Damascus-Tel Aviv talks, there prevailed a stalemate in the talks and even introduction of a change in the level of the negotiating delegations failed to break the ice in the talks.

The Maryland talks, which started as of late December last year, are at the start line after the passage of one month. Several rounds of talks in Maryland not only have failed to introduce a settlement for the removal of differences over Israel's withdrawal from the Golan Heights as well as security arrangements on the two sides of the border between the occupied Palestine and Syria, but today, according to the head of the Syrian delegation negotiating in the peace talks, the differences have been widened. The obstructions created by the Zionist regime and the deployment of the lever of time against Syria, especially in the final round of Maryland talks, has well revealed this reality that today the Israeli statesmen just pursue continuation of talks and intend to avoid a halt in the talks.

According to analysts, bringing up of the issue of holding of official elections in Israel on 28 May — which will be held five months in advance — pursues to major targets under the present conditions [as heard]. The first objective of the Zionist regime is to exert pressure on Syria and tighten the time ring for Damascus and in this manner make the Syrians rush to make a choice. The second target of the Zionist regime is to follow the peace talks in more relaxation and confidence through retaining the Labor Party in the Zionist regime's ruling body.

In view of the conditions mentioned, it seems that the 17th visit of the U.S. Secretary of State to the region, which has been of great significance to the U.S., has been of no success — the visit on which the Democrats had relied as an ace for the future U.S. presidential elections.

Iran: U.S. Presence in Persian Gulf Called 'Threat' to Security

NC0802172996 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 5 Feb 96 p 2

[Editorial: "U.S. Presence in Persian Gulf Main Threat to Regional Security"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Since the U.S.-led Allied invasion of Iraq in 1991 under the pretext of rescuing Kuwait, the United States has not missed any opportunity to augment its military presence in the region.

It is obvious, even to a layman, that the U.S. presence in the region is totally uncalled for. Iraqi military capability was almost totally dismantled by the Allied forces during the Persian Gulf War. Iraq is no longer a serious threat to the security of the Persian Gulf. Other Persian Gulf mini-states are not even in a position to defend their own territories to be considered possible threats to the region's security.

Without any doubt the main threat to regional security comes from the presence of alien forces and unprecedented stockpile of arms and ammunition in the tiny Arab states of the Persian Gulf.

The oil embargo of 1973, which led to a quadrupling of oil prices in international markets, led to a scramble by U.S. and other industrialized countries to recycle petrodollars into their markets through increased export

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of their sophisticated weapons. To create the market, the U.S. looked for a convenient excuse to transfer arms to the region and found it by portraying communism as a threat to reckon with throughout the Cold War era.

Today, the U.S. is playing the old card, but this time it is Iran which is being projected by Washington as a threat to the region's security. Admiral Scot Redd, commander of the U.S. Fifth Fleet, said on Sunday [4 February] that "Iran poses a threat to navigation and aircraft flying over the (Persian) Gulf."

Internationally accepted statistics show that Iran has the lowest military expenditure in the Middle East. Iran's foreign policy, in theory and in practice, is based on peaceful coexistence with all its neighbors. That it is no source of threat to regional security is a fact; it is also no secret that it is a source of stability for this strategic region of the world.

Why then should Washington every now and then level baseless charges against Iran? The reason is that Washington has to justify its illegal presence in the region, on the one hand, and prepare a ground sale of arms to the Arab states of the Persian Gulf, on the other.

Instead of pointing fingers to others, Washington had better leave the responsibility of maintaining regional security to the regional states and clear the region of its illegitimate presence.

Iran: Borujerdi Says Tehran Concerned Over Indian-Pakistani Tension

LD0702100996 Tehran IRNA in English 0942 GMT 7 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb. 7, IRNA — Tehran is deeply concerned over the tension that recently flared up between Pakistan and India because of Kashmir, disclosed Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Asia-Pacific Affairs 'Ala'eddin Borujerdi, in an interview with the English daily 'TEHRAN TIMES'. The chronic issue between India and Pakistan was revived when two rockets hit the village of Kahuta in Pakistan-controlled Kashmir on January 26, 1996.

Iran has announced its readiness to mediate between the two parties in this regard, Borujerdi said, stressing that no one would benefit from the crisis. Meanwhile, talking about the Babri Mosque issue in India, the deputy minister emphasized that from the outset, Tehran has denounced the destruction of the mosque as it symbolized the escalation of religious and ethnical clashes in India. Extremist Hindus destroyed the historic Babri Mosque on December 6, 1992.

Asked about Tehran's views on the nuclear activities of India and Pakistan, Borujerdi said that Tehran is concerned over the arms race among regional countries and believes that the region should be declared a nuclear free zone.

Iran: Country's Efforts To Resolve Afghan Crisis Detailed

LD0702144396 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 7 Feb 96

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Iranian deputy foreign minister in charge of Asia-Pacific affairs, Mr. Ala'eddin Borujerdi, Tuesday afternoon arrived in the Afghan capital, Kabul, and met with President Rabbani and some other officials of the country.

In a press conference, Iranian deputy foreign minister described the objectives of his trip as exchanges of views with the high- ranking Afghan officials and leaders of the opposition parties to end the clashes there.

On the other aim of the trip, Mr. Borujerdi said that he would try ease tension between Islamabad and Kabul as well as promoting cooperation between Iran and Afghanistan on various spheres.

Mr. Borujerdi will later on travel to Pakistan to inform the Pakistani officials of the outcome of his dialogues with Afghan officials.

Presently, Pakistan and Afghanistan don't enjoy good ties and Tehran is trying to improve the situation.

Islamic Republic of Iran's efforts are in fact aimed at restoring peace and stability in the region. Since the continuation of tension between Pakistan and Afghanistan will not help resolve the differences and will have dire consequences. Talks between all parties involved and the government is the best solution. Iranian officials believe as long as this problem has not been solved current problems in Afghanistan will remained unsolved.

In this regard, Mr. Borujerdi, Iranian deputy foreign minister, stated that there is a relative calm in Afghanistan despite reports by foreign news agencies.

The only faction that still favors war is the Taleban group. As a results of Iran's mediation, the government of Rabbani met and conferred with most of the warring factions, including Golboddin Hekmatyar's Hezb-e Eslami Party, Khalili's wing of Wahdat Eslami, as well as General Dostum's National Islamic Movement, reaching some agreements. Now they favor resolving the difference round the table and not in the battlefields.

Nevertheless, the Taleban group does not believe in negotiations and is worsening the grave living condition of people.

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Islamic Republic of Iran have a six further efforts aimed at removing the obstacles and ending the crisis as a firm policy until favorable outcome. The trip of the Islamic Republic of Iran's deputy foreign minister in charge of the Asian and Pacific affairs is taking in the same connection.

Iran: Agreement Reached With Spain on Banking Cooperation

LD0702205696 Tehran IRNA in English 1941 GMT 7 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Madrid, Feb. 7, IRNA — The Central Bank of Iran (CBI) and Spain's Bilbao-based Banco Bilbao Vizcaya (BBV) reached an agreement on opening of two letters of credit (lc) worth dlrs. 100 million each.

The first lc would be for purchase of basic goods from spain with BBI [as received] providing CBI payment facilities of 360 days.

The second letter of credit would be used for purchase of machinery from Spain during the second 5-year development plan (1995-1999).

Meanwhile, the CBI will place the BBV in the list of international banks which are authorized to open letters of credit for purchase of Iranian oil.

Iran: Paper Urges UN Human Rights Envoy To Consider Religion

NC0802135196 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 6 Feb 96 p 2

[Editorial: "Human Rights Should Be Judged According to a Nation's Character"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The international criteria for human rights are respected by everyone. These criteria, however, should not be viewed apart from a nation's culture, religion, and national traditions.

For example, when a government decrees that women should appear in public only with proper clothing, the international community might decide that that government is depriving women of their rights. But our religion tells us that is how women should appear in public. We must be judged, not according to international standards, but, in this case, according to our religion's commands.

The special human rights representative must not surrender to direct and indirect pressures from the United States and other Western powers, whose aims are to use human rights as a leverage against Iran. This would lead Iran to gain confidence in the United Nations' criteria and mechanism for implementing human rights.

The UN special representative should not allow representatives of countries which themselves violate human rights, and are against Iran, to take advantage of the respect and reputation which has been accorded the UN for the purpose of fomenting enmity towards the government and nation of Iran.

No country, including Iran, claims to be free from flaws. One can magnify minute flaws of any country in order to present it in a bad light. The consequence would be that countries which do, an fact, violate human rights in a major way take on a low profile, while countries with minor human rights violations enter the stage for the scrutiny of world public opinion.

Iran: Admiral on Country's 'Major Part' in Gulf Security

LD0702110396 Tehran IRNA in English 1038 GMT 7 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb. 7, IRNA — Rear Admiral Ashkbus Danehkar, the commander of Khatam ol-Anbia tactical naval base here Tuesday reiterated that the Islamic Republic of Iran will by no means allow any flaw in the security of navigation in the Persian Gulf. He added that Iran, due to having the longest coastline, the most continental shelf, access to the waters plus mainland, the most population, and also holding economic monopoly over some regions, plays a major part in maintaining security in the Persian Gulf.

Danehkar went on to say, "Therefore, in order to ensure the preparedness of the military forces for safeguarding Iran's territorial integrity, Iranian navy stages several maneuvers with the participation of armed forces in the Persian Gulf region every year." The rear admiral also pointed out that the international conventions on disarmament and arms control have not yet achieved much success, a fact which has prompted Iran to launch military exercises based on the U.N. Charter as deterrent measures and in order to defend its national security.

Iran: President Praises Publishers', Authors' Anti-West Role

LD0602193696 Tehran IRNA in English 1817 GMT 6 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb. 6, IRNA — President Akbar Hashemi—Rafsanjani said on Tuesday that Iran's success in resisting the savage pressures of world arrogance especially that of the U.S., is indebted to its scientific and technological reserves.

Speaking at the 13th annual function to introduce the best books of the year, Hojjat ol-Eslam Rafsanjani told leading authors, researchers and translators present, that

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the Islamic republic draws its support from scholars and laymen alike, and those who have unwisely embarked on exerting pressure on Iran to prevent it from reaching its goals have neen disappointed.

Today, he said, Iran is witnessing the publishing, compiling and translating of books and similar activities, which indicate the great steps taken forward in the sphere of science and learning.

The president said that it is the duty of the government to create the moral environment and provide the material requirements of scholars, and that scholars in turn should not withhold their knowledge and learning from the younger generation.

He said that the path of progress on any society lies in promotion of science and technology and through encouraging research and innovative scholarship.

"Fortunately, the Holy Qur'an is the most original document for social life. The Holy Quran encourages us to develop our learning and develop the talents of the people in their quest for knowledge and science," said the president.

He added that the Islamic republic has accordingly succeeded in meeting a major part of its needs in industry, agriculture, telecommunications, and defence.

President Rafsanjani awarded top authors with the international award going to a book on Iranology in linguistics titled 'Zadsparam' which was published by the Paris-based institute of Iranian studies.

Minister of culture and the Islamic guidance, Mostafa Mirsalim gave a report on the process of nominating the top authors, translators, and books for the awards. He also briefed the president on the private and public investments in the publishing industry of the country.

Iran: Rafsanjani on Social Security Project, Medical Progress

LD0302113396 Tehran IRNA in English 1042 GMT 3 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb. 3, IRNA — President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani underlined here on Saturday that poverty will soon be wiped out from the Islamic Iran through fundamental plans made to achieve this objective.

Addressing a gathering of professors and students of Shahid Beheshti medical sciences university, the president added that by carrying out the project of social security for the whole nation, which will be fulfilled after implementing the public medical insurance plan, elimination of poverty in Iran will be feasible.

Referring to the measures taken by the government in the area of higher education, President Rafsanjani said that higher education is one of the most basic foundations of progress and development in today's world. He added that the achievements of the government in this area are greater than what was previously anticipated.

The Iranian specialists proved that the strong will and resolve is the key to all scientific achievements and progress, he said, adding that the Iranian medical specialists are now able to perform the most delicate surgical operations in the country, which reflects credit on Iran.

The Iranian president also touched on the efforts made by the government to attain self-sufficiency in the field of producing medical drugs and equipment. He noted that effective measures have been taken with this end in view. Considering the country's solid industrial foundation, Iran will join the producers of medical equipment in the near future, President Rafsanjani emphasized.

Iran: President Inspects Urban Development Plan

LD0502090896 Tehran IRNA in English 0840 GMT 5 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] tehran, Feb. 5, IRNA — President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani inspected on Monday the different stages of progress in preparing Iran's national skeleton plan at the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development.

The plan is to be implemented with the cooperation of the Ministries of Agriculture, Construction Jihad, Energy, Mines and Metals, Post and Telegraph and Telephone and the Environment Protection Organization.

It is aimed at preparing the ground for the expansion of the existing cities, building new cities along with preserving the natural resources, and better utilizing the existing infrastuctures.

During the president's inspection of the country's skeleton plan, the minister of housing and urban development, Abbas Ahmad Akhundi, briefed the president on the objectives and progress of the plan.

The plan has been initiated on the national, regional and local levels due to urban population explosion, the urgent need for new cities, preventing the destruction of natural resources, and the lack of adequate planning for the country's lands.

To attain the goals of the plan, research has been conducted in different areas such as population and space, industry and space, the water resources and population distribution, potential of lands and their utilization,

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weather and climate, and urban and communications network.

Iran: Report Submitted to Rafsanjani on Sepah Bank Embezzlement

LD0502114896 Tehran IRNA in English 1131 GMT 5 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb. 5, IRNA — Details of the embezzlement in the Paris branch of Sepah Bank have been submitted to President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, said general inspector, Hojjat ol-Eslam Ebrahim Raisi, speaking to the English-language daily, 'TEHRAN TIMES' Monday. He said, since the judiciary is responsible for the judicial procedures of the case, the findings of the inspection team have already been handed over to the judiciary chief, Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi.

Raisi said that, head of the Paris branch of Sepah Bank has deposited a handsome amount of hard currency to the account of a stockbroker to gain profit out of it. But the amount was not received by the bank in due time and the issue was reported to the French financial authorities along with documented evidences, he said adding that the case was confirmed by the French police and now the manager of the Paris branch of Sepah Bank is wanted by the French police.

Raisi further added that pursuant to the president's order the General Inspectorate Organization has carried out investigations and it will come to the conclusion in cooperation with the foreign officials. Raisi after his appointment as head of the organization, reopened the case of rls. 1,230 billion embezzlement in Saderat Bank.

Iran: President Sends Message to Cinema Artists

LD0502144996 Tehran IRNA in English 1311 GMT 5 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb. 5, IRNA — President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani here on Monday said the Islamic Republic of Iran is a guardian of justice, freedom and faith in Almighty God.

In his message to the first meeting of the cinema of the sacred defence, read by presidential advisor for social affairs Masih Mohajeri, the president said Iranian artists should safeguard the honor and dignity of human being and convey the message of the struggles of the Iranian nation.

The president said eight years of honorable and sacred defence of the Iranian nation (1980-88 war imposed by Iraq) is a valuable treasure for the present generation and those to come, adding that such a significant experience has served to link the monotheists and the oppressed throughout the world.

The history of the Islamic Iran is full of lessons, the president remarked, adding that the artists with the help of appropriate means and techniques should safeguard jihad for the sake of God.

The artists should also convey, in the best possible way, those sublime lessons to the contemporary and the future generations, the president's message read.

The president hoped that the meeting would lay concrete basis for the promotion and enhancement of popular and committed arts.

Iran: Nateq-Nuri on Bereaved Families, Revolutionary Values

LD0602155496 Tehran IRNA in English 1521 GMT 6 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb. 6, IRNA — Majlis Speaker 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri here Tuesday said that contribution of the bereaved families of the martyrs in the management of the affairs of the country would put an end to the concern that revolutionary values would be undermined and revolutionary forces put aside from social activities. Hojjat ol-Eslam Nateq-Nuri, who made the remark in a meeting with managers of 'Shahed' investment company, underlined the need for taking care of the financial status of the bereaved families of the martyrs in addition to paying attention to their moral condition. He referred to the families of the martyrs as the main owners of the revolution, adding that management of the country should be delegated to the revolution's owners.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Nateq-Nuri said that fair distribution of wealth in the country did not mean equal allocation of all facilities. Rather, he stressed, justice was giving priority to those who have invested more for the sake of the revolution.

He continued that families of the martyrs and war veterans had devoted their most precious assets in the path of the Islamic revolution, adding that they deserved to be given priority in the distribution of the country's facilities.

Elsewhere in his remarks, the speaker criticized those intending to gain economic development at the cost of values and said what the fourth Majlis was insisting on was revolutionary values.

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Iran: Rafsanjani Speaks on Country's Technical Progress

LD0802134496 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The fifth international Kharazmi festival ended today. Our correspondents report:

[Unidentified correspondent] Greetings to the viewers of the midday news bulletin. After three weeks of covering the reports on the international Kharazm' festival, today, in the presence of President Hashemi-Rafsanjani, the domestic and international outstanding scientific projects were named and their designers were given prizes. [passage omitted]

[Second unidentified correspondent] Addressing a gathering of scientists and researchers participating in the ninth international Khazrazmi festival in Tehran, President Hashemi-Rafsanjani said that creative and constructive forces are laying a foundation and strengthening the country's growth and progress.

The president added that an investment of over 820 billion rials for expansion of research work in the country's general Budget Bill manifests the faith and belief of the officials of the system of the Islamic Republic in the role and value of research work in development and in giving priority to it; and he described it as one of the achievements that the Islamic government can be proud of.

The head of the Supreme Council of the Islamic Cultural Revolution said that the current independence and powerful technical capabilities of the country to implement the most complicated and huge infrastructural projects results from the correct and principled implementation of government policies within the first development plan. He added: Achieving long-term results and benefitting from the objectives of fundamental moves requires sharp- sightedness and firm will, and these are evident today among the officials and employees of the Islamic system.

The president said the strong points of the period during the implementation of the first development plan are to encourage those plans and moves which could allow for real independence and to pay attention to training expert workers. He said: The country's technical stength in building power stations; creating important petrochemical, steel, oil and gas production units; building dams and silos; manufacturing machinery; and producing agricultural equipment and establishments, including implementation of the new pressurized irrigation systems, all of which seemed farfetched ideas in the past, are the results of the determination and firm belief of officials and the cooperation of the country's experts and scientists. It has helped the Islamic Republic of Iran to acquire technology and industries. [passage omitted]

Iran: Cabinet Calls For Mass Turnout in 11 Feb Rallies

LD0702204596 Tehran IRNA in English 1913 GMT 7 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb. 7, IRNA - The Council of Ministers in its Wednesday session invited people to take massive part in the annual Bahman 22 (Feb. 11) rallies, marking the victory of the Islamic revolution in Iran.

The session presided over by President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, underlined the significance of the nationwide rallies, and said that the renewal of the people's allegiance with the ideals of the late Imam Khomeyni and the guidelines of the present leader of the Islamic revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i, shows their firm resolution for continuing the path blazed out by the father of the Islamic revolution for safeguarding divine values.

Iran: Deputy on Election Candidates, Qualifications

NC0702221596 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 29 Jan 96 p 6

[FBIS Translated Text] Engineer 'Ali Naqi-Khamushi, Tehran deputy in the Islamic Majles, said: The current majority and minority groups in the Fourth Majles will maintain their status quo in the Fifth Majles as well. He said the Tehran Militant Clergy Association [TMCA] and the Tehran Militant Clerics Society [TMCS] were the majority and minority groups respectively in the Fourth Islamic Majles.

He added: Some new faces will probably enter the Majles from among the candidates nominated by the two groups.

Khamushi, who is a member of the Islamic Coalition Association [ICA] stated: The ICA has submitted a list of 30 of its favorite candidates to the TMCA, of whom 28 are also on the TMCA's list.

Speaking to the special correspondent of the electoral headquarters for the Majles elections, he said: Currently there is a difference of opinion regarding one or two ICA candidates.

Commenting on the number of clerics on the TMCA list, Khamushi said: In my opinion, the number of clerical candidates on the final list of the TMCA will be quite similar to the Fourth Majles elections.

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Describing the ICA's views, the Tehran Majles deputy said: The ICA believes in the principle of the Velayat-e Faqih [rule by the Supreme Jurisconsult] and considers it one of the immutable principles of the revolution. It also follows three main slogans: Follow the imam's line, obey the leadership, and support Hashemi- Rafsanjani.

The deputy, who is also the head of the Iranian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, commented on the issue of technocrats [preceding word in English], saying: Unfortunately, the controversy about technocrats is misleading. Those who have raised it have gone off on a political tangent instead of discussing technicalities. In our revolution we should categorize groups according to their revolutionary bases and values.

He said: In the Islamic Republic of Iran's system every specialist who believes in the absoluteness of the Velayat-e Faqih can assume responsibilities.

The Tehran Majles deputy stated that deputies of the Islamic Majles should be ethical, ideological, socially capable, and proficient in one of the basic sciences such as economics, politics, sociology, or agriculture.

Khamushi said: Having basic knowledge in one of these sciences helps deputies be more incisive in appraising and approving the laws.

He said the atmosphere of peace and calm which prevents disagreement among the government, the Majles, and factions is the most important characteristic of the Fourth Majles. He expressed the hope that this quality will continue to be present in the Fifth Majles as well.

Iran: Official Interviewed on Penalties for Election Offenses

NC0802165996 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 3 Feb 96 pp 1, 14

[Report by A. Rezvani-y Moqaddam]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran—Governmental organs are not entitled to use government facilities for election campaigns to the benefit of certain candidates in the upcoming Majles elections, said the head of the General State Organization of Investigation, Hojjat ol-Eslam Seyyed Ebrahim Ra'isi, in an exclusive interview with the TEHRAN TIMES.

Alluding to the new steps taken by the group called Khedmatgozaran-e Sazandegi (G-16), [Group of 16 Officials], Ra'isi said that they may present a list of candidates for the upcoming Majles elections, but government facilities will not be used to promote candidates.

Under Article 67 of the election law, the Judiciary gave the responsibility of supervising the elections to the General State Organization of Investigation, but the responsibility is limited to governmental and semi-governmental organizations, he said.

The head of the General State Organization of Investigation also said that supervising the election process is carried out in three categories, namely (1) responding to complainants, (2) investigation under the order of the Chief of the Judiciary, the President, the Majles and the Grand Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i, and (3) continuous, self-initiated inspection in order to assure that everything is carried out lawfully.

Ra'isi referred to the Constitution as a well-developed and unique Islamic Constitution.

The determination of the nominees' eligibility is the responsibility of the Guardian Council; the proper implementation of the elections is the responsibility of the Ministry of the Interior, while investigating governmental organizations is the duty of the General State Organization of Investigation.

The prerequisites for running for Parliament are not complicated: abiding by the Constitution is the only prerequisite.

Helping the officials and the people in carrying out sound elections is a duty of all organizations, but using government facilities in order to promote individual candidates is forbidden; the minimum penalty for an offender is dismissal from his governmental post, and other penalties provided by law, Ra'isi said.

He also said that no candidate has the right to make false promises in order to attract votes. Members of Parliament should be elected from among the people and experts committed to religious values and the Islamic Revolution.

Ra'isi added that candidates may campaign, but they should not bear great costs in order to influence public opinion.

After the eligibility of candidates is confirmed by a nine-member executive board chosen from the people and affiliated to the Ministry of the Interior, the list of qualified candidates will be handed over to the Guardian Council, which will in turn determine the final eligibility of candidates.

The executive board's main responsibilities are evaluating the eligibility of candidates, determining the number and location of ballot boxes, selecting the supervisors and counting the votes. The General State Organization of Investigation has offices in ten provinces and, contrary to last year, it does not await complaints but seeks out any improprieties which may exist.

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According to the elections headquarters, until 13:00 hours local time [0930 GMT] Friday [2 February] 2,446 candidates had registered their names for running in the elections for the fifth term of the Islamic Consultative Assembly (Parliament), of whom 283 candidates are from Tehran constituency.

On Friday 143 candidates registered for the elections, 11 from Tehran and 132 from provincial constituencies.

He said 96 candidates had registered on the first day of the elections, followed by 61 and 52 on the second day and 66 on Friday, all of them with the Office of the Governor of Tehran [sentence as published].

He said the supervisory bodies for monitoring the elections at the polling centers for minority representatives in Iran had been formed earlier Friday.

Iran: Militant Clergy Publishes List of Candidates

NC0802121596 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 31 Jan 96 pp 1, 14

[TEHRAN TIMES Service report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran — The Jame'eh-ye Ruhaniyat-e Mobarez (JRM) [Militant Clergy Association] of Tehran completed a list of its candidates for the Tehran constitutency, an informed source told the TEHRAN TIMES Tuesday [30 January].

The JRM candidates' list has been finalized and there will be no change in the nominees list, the source said.

JRM's new candidates are as follows:

—Hojjat ol-Eslam 'Abdol Hoseyn Mo'ezzi, former managing director of the Supreme Leader's public relations office

—Hojjat ol-Eslam Seyyed Reza Akrami, Semnan representative to the Majles
—Asadollah Badamchian, adviser of justice chief in social affairs
—Seyyed Mohammad Asghari, former Leader's representative in KEYHAN Institute
—Musa Zargar
—Davud Danesh-Ja'fari
The JRM's candidates who are currently Tehran MP's are as follows:
—Hojjat ol-Eslam 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri
—Hojjat ol-Eslam Movahhedi-Kermani
—Mrs. Maryam Behruzi
—Mrs. Marziyeh Vahid-Dastjerdi
—Mrs. Nafiseh Fayyazbakhsh
—Mrs. Monireh Nowbakht
—Mrs. Parvin Salihi
—Hojjat ol-Eslam Hasan Rowhani
—Hojjat ol-Eslam Mohsen Mojtahed-Shabestari
—Hojjat ol-Eslam Seyyed 'Ali Akbar Hoseyni
—Seyyed Reza Taqavi
—Seyyed 'Ali Akbar Torabi
—Hojjat ol-Eslam Movahhedi-Savoji
—Hojjat ol-Eslam Dorri-Najafabadi
—Hojjat ol-Eslam Seyyed Mahmud Do'a'i
—Habibollah Asgar-Owladi
—Mohammad Javad Larijani
—Mohammad Reza Bahonar
—Seyyed Morteza Nabavi
—'Abbas Sheybani
—Mohsen Yahyavi
—Seyyed 'Ali-Naqi Khamushi
—Shahaboddin Sadr
—'Ali 'Abbaspur Tehranifard

Addording to the source, Mahmud Saber, Mohammad Sa'id Raja'i- Khorasani, Mohammad Hashem Rahbari, Mohannad Kazen Seyfian, Seyyed 'Ali Qayuri-Najafabadi, 'Abbas 'Ali 'Amid-Zanjani have been crossed out off the list of JRM candidates introduced for the fourth tenure of the Majles [sentence as published].

Iran: Ayatollah Discusses Association's Election Strategy

LD0702223296 Tehran IRNA in English 2112 GMT 7 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb 7, IRNA — Prominent Member of the Jameh-ye Rowhaniyat-e Mobarez [Militant Clergy Association] (JRM), Ayatollah Mahdavi Kani said here today that healthy elections for the Majles would depend upon the integrity of elections administrators. He said the supervision of the elections must make sure that no one candidate will be done injustice as a result of improper administration of the elections.

He also added that the authority and the last say of the Council of Guardians, whose job it is to decide on the ideological and ethical qualifications of candidates, will have to be safeguarded so that they a verdict is issued firmly and without embarrasment.

Asked to comment on the rumoured intention of the JRM to exclude other political groups from the elections he said the JRM never cherished to do so. He added that the fact the JRM had refused to offer its campaign facilities to people with different outlooks should not have been interpreted as such.

Ayatollah Mahdavi kani said JRM had links with many political groupings, and that despite its requests to those

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groups to offer separate lists of their candidates they had insisted that they wanted to share the ticket with JRM.

Asked to comment on national development plans and the criteria for those plans, he said that no one country could serve as a model for Islamic Iran. He added that development patterns in Iran would have to be based on the personal scholarship of the ulema and scientists.

Iran: Reactions to Ministers' Statement on Elections Criticized

NC0702214196 Tehran ETTELA'AT in Persian 25 Jan 96 p 2

[Commentary by Dr. Mohammad Baqer Sadri]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The statement that was issued by a number of government officials has had extensive repercussions in the country's political circles and has sparked off both negative and positive reactions.

Irrespective of the reactions by various political groups who take an adversarial view of the statement, the question that arises in the minds of the public is whether the repeated calls for participation in the elections are "good". If they are, then why the reactions to this statement, which have gone as far as saying that it is unconstitutional?

The reason for the current situation may be that on the basis of the Constitution and the Elections Law, statesmen cannot oppose or support candidates or use state facilities to do so. Of course, this is a good principle. But, first of all, did the signatories of the statement have such an intention; and secondly, what did they actually do to accomplish their objectives?

The truth is that a statement was published, but even if we assume that the signatories secretly intended to use state facilities for or against candidates, we cannot assume this—which is probably against the law—and thus breach the law ourselves!

The Constitution, which is the great covenant of the revolution, explicitly insures the freedom to make statements, and there is also freedom to form political nuclei and even parties. Therefore, those who issued this statement have not only not done anything wrong, they have even observed one of the principles of the Constitution.

The fact is that when public opinion, now focused on the elections, sees the atmosphere that has been created, it asks if a statement by persons who are serving in the government, have received a vote of confidence from the esteemed Majles, and are the president's colleagues draws such a negative reaction, what will happen when others who lack all these attributes and who are allegedly unorthodox make statements? [passage omitted]

If, on the basis of the Constitution, we describe these actions and reactions as a clash of opinions, can we forbid the people to be the final judges on this clash of opinions; is this our duty alone? The people have a right to choose the best from among all that is said, heard, and written. So let's allow them to choose.

If there is fear that a number of government officials will use state facilities for or against some people, let's try to prevent this by law. But nothing has happened yet. We cannot accuse a person or a group of something that might possibly be done. [passage omitted]

Let us be careful that our words, deeds, and behavior not give the public the impression that the argument is over power. We should be especially alert now, when various plots and ploys are being hatched, not to provide ammunition to the enemies of our independent country and who wish our people ill. If we consider the Majles to be the essence of the nation, let us allow the people— free of all statements and declarations—to choose for themselves. And of course, the necessary conditions should be created so that the people can have an opportunity to choose the best. We should also remember that Iran's brave and patient people are extremely capable of differentiating among the various opinions and that they are very capable of telling the pure from the impure and the ugly from the beautiful.

Iran: Labor Minister Kamali on Majles Election

LD0702141796 Tehran IRNA in English 1410 GMT 7 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb. 7, IRNA — The Iranian electorate should vote for those nominees who are committed to the revolution and its principles and follow the guidelines of the leader of the Islamic Republic Ayatollah Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i and President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani.

Labor and Social Affairs Minister Hoseyn Kamali, who made the remark at a gathering of students in Tehran on Wednesday, said only those should find their ways to the Majles who can really represent the Iranian nation. Kamali said that the possible occupation of parliamentary seats by those who possess money and power and are mostly linked to the western or eastern blocs will in no way bring prosperity to the brave and valiant nation of Iran. He cautioned that putting obstacles or refusing to participate in the upcoming polls would mean being indifferent to one's own destiny and that of society. He called on workers to pay more attention to elections in an effort to defend the Islamic

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revolution's achievements and preserve their own social and vocational rights.

Iran: Importance of Strong Majles, Deputies Viewed

NC0802113396 Mashhad KHORASAN in Persian 25 Jan 96 pp 1, 11

[Editorial: "Some Reflections on the Sensitivity of the Fifth Majles"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The fifth Majles elections are a topical issue that has monopolized the headlines of newspapers and the mass media. Not only has this issue become the burning question in controversies in domestic circles, it has received even greater coverage in the international media.

For years, political analysts have been observing all the developments concerning our country and people and are seeking with all their might to influence Iran's future sovereignty and to undermine the nation's independence. They have focused their gaze with greater precision, subtlety, and a new sensitivity on the important event scheduled for the latter part of the year 1374 [year beginning 21 March 1995].

They believe that they may be able to drive a wedge in the form of the invincible revolution, as they have sought to do unsuccessfully for many years. They know that the Islamic Majles is one of the institutions that has played a fundamental, vital role in the system and as it did during the revolution, the Islamic system of Iran has relied on the will of the people. The people are the ones who have always defined the mode of administering the government, its laws, and their implementation, and have identified its problems on the basis of their beliefs and attention to the principle of the Velayat-e Faqih [rule by the supreme jurisconsult].

Hence, the Majles elections can, on the one hand, be a source of strength and on the other, a point of weakness. This is because if qualified deputies are elected, it would certainly boost the strength of the system and the nation. If the best ones are not elected, naturally the Majles will not be able to play an effective role. As all are well aware, the importance of the principle of participation in the Majles elections is not a secret and the well-informed Iranian nation knows full well that we are being evaluated on this participation. The greater the turnout in the Majles elections, the more the world's governments and peoples will view us in a positive light. The following points are worth noting in this regard:

1. As the great leader of the revolution has stated: "The people should realize that there is no interference or malpractice in the elections." The election officials will act in such a manner in their selection of candidates that the people will be assured of the wholesomeness of the elections and will be convinced that personal ulterior motives will have no place in the process.

2. All those who can help in various capacities to hold better elections and to encourage the people to participate in greater numbers should do so and not refrain from entering the arena.

The fact is that those who want to fish in murky waters should not see conditions as favorable. Our people have always acted in such a way in past elections that they have blinded the enemies' eyes in such scenarios. If the past is testimony to the intelligence and alertness of the people, the upcoming elections should be no exception. However, it is important that one not allow those who were outside the country during the difficult days of the war or were mere spectators inside it—who have not tasted the pain and hardship the others did—to enter the arena.

It would be most unfortunate if those who act as though they are enlightened or pose as specialists or use their various contacts to enter the elections were to enter them ostentatiously and usurp the rights and positions of the compassionate, dedicated, and skilled individuals.

Hence, at this juncture, not participating actively in the elections does not appear correct and one cannot relinquish the field to others by presenting various justifications. In our opinion, if some of the factions have a lesser chance of winning, it should not prevent them from contesting the elections in any case. Their main obligation is to participate and not to leave the field open for certain individuals. The chance of their winning or not is a totally different matter. This is something that should be decided by the people, so that they can act on their Islamic obligation. As the late imam had stated, participation in elections was an important precept, and the heirs and followers of the great architect of the Islamic Revolution cannot escape this responsibility.

3. The candidates nominated for the fifth Majles elections should also keep in mind the principles on which the Majles functions. Regardless of which constituency the deputy is elected from, ultimately his obligation in the Majles will be the drafting and approval of laws that pertain to the public and the country. If he has any shortcomings in this area and merely occupies himself with a series of topical issues that are actually the Executive branches' responsibility, it will be obvious that he has neglected his legislative duties. Hence, a deputy's success will depend on his performance in the Majles.

Therefore, it would be inappropriate if someone were to take full credit for the measures implemented by the

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government or officials on the basis of the first Five-Year Plan—which by the Grace of God, was a lofty achievement—and to say 'I did this job.' If anyone were to make such claims, he should be asked what the rest of the department and administration was doing.

On the other hand, one should also abhor the approach of certain individuals who magnify problems and belittle any work that has been accomplished in order to suggest that their predecessors were unsuccessful and they themselves can solve all problems. They should take heed that by doing so, they have not only dealt a blow to their rivals, but are presenting the system's services and the revolution as lackluster. Thus, they are in league with foreigners, who are seeking to minimize the system's phenomenal services.

Hence, criticism is necessary and one should evaluate one's errors, but not as the popular adage says, by poking out the child's eye in order to swat the fly!

Of course, the candidates who are very intelligent will not act in this manner and this was merely mentioned peripherally. However, our people should also be alert and recognize people for what they are, from their attitude.

Iran: Text of Proposed Press Laws: Part I

96LA0095A Tehran HAMSHAHRI in Persian 27 May 95 p 8

[FBIS Translated Text] Note:

[Begin boxed item] The proposal to amend the press law was offered to the speaker of the Majles by 16 Majles deputies. This proposal consists of nine chapters, 60 articles, and 30 notes.

The Social Service of HAMSHAHRI, in order to help the Majles devise and ratify the new press law, provides the text of the proposal for the public, especially the experts.

It is hoped that through the exchange of ideas, criticism, and opinions regarding this proposal, the comprehensiveness and stability of the press law and its conformity with the spirit of the Constitution and the intellectual and cultural atmosphere of the society will be enhanced. HAMSHAHRI is prepared to publish the opinions of the experts regarding the proposed press law. [end boxed item]

Examination of the request of applicants with regard to issuing licenses, changes in licenses, and also revocation of the publication license and temporary closure is the responsibility of the Press Oversight Committee.

Chapter 1. Definition of the Press

Article 1. The press in this law consists of publications that are published regularly with a permanent name, date, and consecutive number, in the form of news, analytical, educational, informational, and research journals in scientific, cultural, economic, political, social, and athletic areas.

Note. Extra publications are exclusive to those journals that are published regularly.

Chapter 2. The Mission of the Press

Article 2. The mission of the press in the regime of the Islamic Republic consists of:

A. enlightening the public mind and increasing the knowledge and raising the level of understanding of its readership
B. advancing the goals that are expressed in the Constitution of the Islamic Republic;
C. efforts to negate disuniting divisions and not position the various strata of the society against one another;
D. fighting the manifestations of the colonialist culture, propagation and publicity of the Islamic culture, and carrying out the duty of instruction to do good and prevention of prohibited acts;
E. preserving and strengthening the national unity, dignity, and power.

Chapter 3. The Rights of the Press

Article 3. The press have the right to publish and inform the public of the constructive views, criticisms, suggestions, and explanations of the people and the officials, provided Islamic standards and national interests are observed.

Note. Constructive criticism is conditional on being logical and rational; avoiding insults, humiliation, and destruction; and containing documented actual facts.

Article 4. No government or nongovernment authority has the right to pressure the press to publish an issue or article or engage in the censorship and control of publications.

Article 5. Acquisition and publication of domestic and foreign news that is for the purpose of increasing the general awareness and protection of the interests of the society, by adhering to this law, is the legal right of the press, and government and public authorities, institutions, and organizations are responsible to present accurate information and news about their activities and actions to the press.

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Article 6. The press is not obliged to reveal its news and information sources to any government or nongovernment authority or organization.

Note. If the offenses cited in Articles 30, 31, and 35 of this law occur, the press is responsible to revel to the proper judicial authorities its news and information sources as accomplices in the crime.

Article 7. Any attack on reporters and prevention of their acquisition and preparation of news is prohibited; and if the reporter or his journal makes a complaint, the perpetrator will be prosecuted.

Note. The above law does not include the instances in which a reporter tries to acquire and publish prohibited news and information cited in this law, and the proper judicial courts may prosecute the violator.

Chapter 4. Restrictions on the Press

Article 8. Journals are free, except in cases of disruption of the foundations of Islam and public rights, as specified in this chapter.

1. Publication of atheistic matters and matters contrary to the necessities of the religion and propagation of matters that harm the foundation of the Islamic Republic.
2. Spreading of debauchery and prohibited acts and matters contrary to public modesty through words, photographs, and pictures.
3. Propagating and spreading extravagance and waste.
4. Creating conflicts among the strata of the society, especially through ethnic and religious issues.
5. Exhorting and encouraging individuals and groups to commit actions against the security, dignity, and interests of the Islamic Republic of Iran, internally or abroad.
6. Revealing and publishing documents, instructions, confidential matters, and secrets of the Armed Forces, military maps, and strongholds, publication of closed session discussions of the Majles and closed court sessions of the Justice Department, investigations by judicial authorities without legal permission, accusations against the accused prior to being proven by the judicial authorities, and details of investigations, the criminal courts, and divorce and family courts.
7. Insults to the religion of Islam and what it holds sacred as well as insults to the grand leader and the proven sources of emulation.
8. Slander of the religion of Islam.
9. Slander of and insult to actual or legal persons who have religious respect, even if it is through the publication of photographs, sketches, or caricatures.
9. Publication and spreading of matters contrary to religious and national customs.
10. Plagiarism and also quoting matters from deviant and anti-Islam presses, parties, groups, or individuals (domestic or foreign) in a manner that publicizes them.

Also, the publication of any matter from individuals who cooperate with counterrevolutionary journals abroad. (The limitations of the above instances will be specified in the bylaws.)

Note. Plagiarism is intentionally using all or a significant part of the writing of other citizens as one's own, even in the form of translation.

Article 9. The following instances are prohibited:

A. Printing and publication of a journal for which a permit has not been issued or whose permit has been revoked or terminated temporarily or permanently.
B. Publication of a journal contrary to the specifications of the issued license by the Press Oversight Committee cited in Article 12 of this law.
C. Publication of a journal in a manner that is mistaken for an existing publication in terms of emblem or form.
D. Publication of a journal without mentioning the specifications cited in Article 20.
E. Centers of publication, printing, and sale are not permitted to print, publish, or sell newspapers and publications that are determined to be contrary to the principles cited in this law by the Press Oversight Committee.

Iran: Text of Proposed Press Laws: Part 2

96LA0095B Tehran HAMSHAHRI in Persian 29 May 95 p 12

[FBIS Translated Text] [Begin boxed item] Note. The first part of the new proposal of the press law, including nine articles, was published on page 8 on Saturday, 6 Khordad [27 May]. The second part follows in today's issue.

In order to help the ministers devise and ratify the new press law, the Social Service of HAMSHAHRI provides the public, especially the experts on press rights and journalists, with the text of the suggested proposal. It is hoped that through the exchange of ideas, criticism, and opinions regarding this proposal, the comprehensiveness and stability of the press law and its conformity with the spirit of the Constitution and the intellectual and cultural atmosphere of the country will be enhanced. HAMSHAHRI is prepared to publish the opinions of the experts regarding the proposed press law. [end boxed item]

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Chapter 5. The Qualifications of the Applicant and Procedures for the Issuance of a License

Article 10. The publication of a journal by actual or legal persons with Iranian capital and acquisition of a license from the Ministry of Islamic Culture and Guidance is allowed.

Article 11. Applicants for licenses must meet the following qualifications:

1. Iranian citizenship;

2. commitment to the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran;
3. a minimum of 25 years of age;
4. of good reputation;
5. not having been bankrupt as a result of their own fault and not having prior penal conviction.

Note 1. If a legal establishment is the applicant for the publication license, all members of the board of directors must meet the above qualifications and the request made by the highest authority of the establishment, according to the bylaws.

Note 2. For domestic bulletins of legal establishments and bulletins of news agencies that provide news, pictures, and articles at the disposal of individuals and publication establishments, the permission of the Ministry of Islamic Culture and Guidance and adherence to Article 2 of this law alone are sufficient.

Note 3. With one license, more than one journal cannot be published.

Note 4. The license holder shall be responsible regarding the general policies of the journal.

Note 5. Prime ministers; ministers; governors general; military, police and gendarmerie commanders; directors of government organizations; general managers and chairmen of boards of directors of government companies and banks; deputies of the two houses of parliament; ambassadors; governors; mayors; chairmen of city councils; members of SAVAK; directors of the Rastakhiz offices in Tehran, provincial capitals, and cities; and those affiliated with the previous regime who have held such positions between 15 Khordad 1342 [5 June 1963] to 22 Bahman 1357 [11 February 1979] and also those who during that period have been the propaganda servants of the past regime through the press, radio and television, or speeches in gatherings are prohibited from publishing journals.

Note 6. Transfer of the license of the journal upon the request of the holder of the license to another person or his heir (or heirs) in case of the death of the license holder shall be possible if the content at the beginning of this article is adhered to.

Article 12. The applicant for a license to publish a journal is responsible for presenting an actual person (himself or another person) as the responsible manager of the journal. The responsible manager of the journal, in addition to the qualifications cited in Article 11, must also meet the following qualifications.

1. He must hold a bachelor's degree suitable to the publication of the journal.

2. The responsible manager must actually and in practice work on the journal he is managing.
3. He must not be the responsible manager of more than one journal.
4. He must be familiar with the main language of the journal.
5. He must have at least one year of journalism experience.

Note. The operation of the journal and all its contents will be the responsibility of the responsible manager.

Article 13. Members of the Press Oversight Committee shall be comprised of trustworthy Muslim individuals who meet the political and moral qualifications, are faithful to the Islamic revolution, and are experts in the cultural and press issues of the country and consist of:

A. The representative of the minister of Islamic culture and guidance

B. A responsible manager elected by the press
C. A Majles deputy elected by the Majles
D. An instructor of the Qom Seminary elected by the Qom Seminary Instructors Society
E. A university professor selected by the minister of culture and higher education
F. A Supreme Court judge selected by the head of the Judicial Branch

Note 1. Members of this committee will be elected by the related authorities within one month prior to the end of each period for a period of two years, upon the invitation of the minister of Islamic culture and guidance.

Note 2. Sessions of the committee become official with the presence of at least two-thirds of the members, and decisions are valid with at least four votes.

Note 3. The Administrative Office of the Press Oversight Committee is located in the Ministry of Islamic Culture and Guidance and will have the responsibility of managing the affairs of the committee and sending its ratified notifications.

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Note 4. The Ministry of Islamic Culture and Guidance is obliged to implement the ratifications of the Press Oversight Committee.

Note 5. The Ministry of Islamic Culture and Guidance is responsible for inviting and holding the election session cited in Paragraph B of this law, and the authority for determining the qualifications of the candidates in those elections, on the basis of the qualifications cited at the beginning of this article, shall be a four-member committee comprised of the individuals in Paragraphs A, C, D, and F.

Article 14. Examination of the request of applicants in regards to issuing licenses, changes in licenses, and also revocation of the publication license and temporary closure is the responsibility of the Press Oversight Committee.

Note. Revocation of the license by the Press Oversight Committee shall occur exclusively in the following cases:

Upon the written request of the holder of the license; noncompliance with the conditions cited in Article 11 of the law and Articles 19, 32, 33, and 34; and repeated violations of Articles 20, 22, 23, and 25 of the law.

Article 15. In case of repeated violations by a journal of the mission and limitations of the press, the Press Oversight Committee will directly, upon the request of the Ministry of Islamic Culture and Guidance, examine the instances of violation, and if the court is qualified to revoke the publication license while temporarily closing the journal, it will present its written request to the proper court.

Note. The period of temporary closure of the journal by the Press Oversight Committee will be deducted from the general stoppage of the journal by the proper court.

Article 16. The Press Oversight Committee is obliged to report to the Ministry of Islamic Culture and Guidance for implementation within a maximum of two weeks from the date of the delivery of the file of the applicant for journal publication by the Central Office of Domestic Press to the Administrative Office of the Press Oversight Committee, on the basis of the articles of this law, whether the request is approved or rejected, by mentioning the reasons.

Note 1. The Ministry of Islamic Culture and Guidance is responsible, within a period of one and a half months from the date of the official registration of the application for issuance of a license, to carry out the necessary investigations and submit the file for decision to the Administrative Office of the Press Oversight Committee.

Note 2. The Ministry of Islamic Culture and Guidance is responsible to take steps within a maximum of two weeks to implement the ratification of the committee.

Article 17. If the responsible manager loses his qualifications cited in Article 11 (as determined by the Press Oversight Committee) or dies or resigns, the license holder is responsible to present another person who meets the qualifications within a period of one month to the Administrative Office of the Press Oversight Committee. Otherwise, the license of that journal will be suspended temporarily or permanently, upon the determination of the Press Oversight Committee cited in Article 13.

Note 1. Until the qualifications of the new responsible manager have been approved, the responsibilities of this position will be conferred on the license holder of the journal.

Note 2. The license holder may submit a request for the dismissal of the responsible manager of his journal along with presentation of the new responsible manager to the Administrative Office of the Press Oversight Committee, and the Oversight Committee is responsible to make a decision within a period of one month on the basis of Article 12 of this law.

Article 18. The responsible manager is obliged to publish the journal within nine months after the license is issued. (This period is 12 months for yearbooks.) Otherwise, with one written warning and another two months of time, if it is not published without a justifiable reason, the publication license will be null and void.

Article 19. Irregular publication of a journal within one year without a justifiable reason (as determined by the Press Oversight Committee) will result in the revocation of the license.

Article 20. In each issue, the name of the license holder, the responsible manager, and the address of the office and the print shop in which the journal is printed, as well as the schedule of publication, area of distribution, the policy of the journal, and the type of publication, must be announced on a specific permanent page. Print shops are also obliged to observe the content of this article.

Iran: Text of Proposed Press Laws: Part 3

96LA0095C Tehran HAMSHAHRI in Persian 30 May 95 [page not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Begin boxed item] **Note:**

Twenty articles of the new proposal of the press law were published on Saturday and Monday. With the hope of the criticism and opinion of experts and

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journalists regarding this proposal, we follow up with the remaining articles. [end boxed item]

Article 21. Journals are permitted to print commercial advertisements while observing the regulations of establishment, supervision over their work, and the activities of advertisement centers.

Article 22. Every newspaper or magazine must prepare sealed account books in accordance with the law and record all its expenditures and income in it and send the annual balance sheet of its revenues and expenditures to the Ministry of Islamic Culture and Guidance. The Ministry of Islamic Culture and Guidance may examine the financial books of the establishment whenever it deems it necessary.

Note. The responsible managers of the press are responsible to inform the Ministry of Islamic Culture and Guidance in writing of the circulation number of each issue of their journal simultaneous with the publication of the next issue.

Article 23. The responsible managers are obliged to deliver on a regular basis and free of charge five copies of each issue of their journal to the Ministry of Islamic Culture and Guidance prior to its distribution and obtain a receipt, and the managers of print shops are not allowed to release the journal from the print shop (except for newspapers) without receiving a copy of the receipt.

Article 24. The entry of any foreign publication into the country that does not disrupt public security and is not contrary to the public morality of the society is permitted.

The related bylaws will be prepared by the Ministry of Islamic Culture and Guidance and approved by the Cabinet.

Chapter 6. Offenses

Article 25. In press matters, whenever insults or slander or untrue matters or criticism of individuals (both actual or legal) is observed, the victim has the right to send a written response to the same journal, and the journal is obliged to print free of charge such explanations in one of the two issues that are published after receipt of the response, on the same page and in the same column with the same font with which the original matter was published. If the size of the response exceeds twice that of the original, the responsible manager has the right not to print the text of the response, unless the above-mentioned person pays for the additional amount, and should the respondent die, the right to respond goes to his heirs.

Article 26. The responsible manager of the journal may refuse to publish the response in the following cases.

1. If the journal has corrected the matter in question in an appropriate and favorable form

2. If the response is contrary to the law or contains words, the publication of which is contrary to the law or includes phrases that are contrary to public morality

3. If the response is presented after the passage of two months after the publication of the matter under protest

Article 27. If in addition to the above-mentioned response, the journal publishes other matters or explanations, the protester has the right to respond once again. Publication of a part of the response in a way that would make it incomplete or incomprehensible, and also adding matters to it, shall be regarded as not having published it, and the text of the response must be published in one issue.

Article 28. The responses of election candidates in the course of the elections must be published in the first issue of the journal, provided they have been submitted to and received in the office of the journal at least six hours prior to the journal going to print.

Article 29. If after the publication of the response it becomes clear that the matter published in the journal has been true, all the related costs for the publication of the response shall be the responsibility of the respondent.

Article 30. Persons of the press who reveal and publish confidential military documents or instructions, or secrets of the military and Guard Corps, or maps of military bases and strongholds during the time of war or peace will be sent to the court for investigation in accordance with the regulations.

Article 31. Anyone who by means of the press encourages the people explicitly to commit a crime or crimes against the internal security or foreign policy of the country as projected in the law on general punishments, if it materializes, shall be sentenced to punishment as accomplices to the same crime, and if it does not materialize, he shall be dealt with in accordance with the opinion of the religious magistrate on the basis of the punishment law.

Article 32. Any journal printing the writing of anyone who insults the religion of Islam, what it holds sacred, and its obligations, will be temporarily closed by the Press Oversight Committee, and the case will be sent to the proper court for examination. If the crime is proven, in addition to the implementation of the religious ruling, the license of the journal will be suspended by the Press Oversight Committee.

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Article 33. If in a journal the leader, the leadership council of the Islamic Republic of Iran, or the proven sources of emulation are insulted, the license of that journal will be revoked by the Press Oversight Committee, and the responsible manager and the writer of that matter will be sent to the proper judicial courts and punished in accordance with the penal laws.

Article 34. Spreading of debauchery through the publication of photographs and pictures is considered contrary to public morality and will result in the temporary closure of the journal for a maximum of four issues. If the offense is repeated, it will result in the revocation of the license of the journal by the Press Oversight Committee.

Article 35. Publication of the discussions of the closed sessions of the Majles and the Justice Department courts or investigation by the intelligence and judicial courts, the revelation of which on the basis of the law is not permitted, is prohibited, and in case of violations, the violator will be treated in accordance with the punishment law.

Note. Examination of the crimes cited in Articles 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, and 35 shall not be dependent on the complaints of the private complainer, and in addition to the prosecutor, each citizen may present his complaint to the proper authorities, in which case, investigation is mandatory.

Article 36. Except for instances mentioned in Articles 30 and 35 of the law, and also reveling personal matters, no news item or matter is considered confidential, and the press is free to publish it, provided it is not among other press crimes cited in this law.

Article 37. The publication of any matter, including accusations, slander, insult, or obscene words, or insulting and other accusations in regards to individuals is prohibited, and the writer and the responsible manager shall be reported to the judicial courts for punishment. The prosecution of those crimes shall depend on a complaint by the private complainant, and if the complaint is retrieved, the prosecution will stop at any stage of the process.

Note 1. In these instances, the (actual or legal) complainer may complain to the proper court to demand damages from the publication of the above-mentioned matters against him, and the court is responsible to examine it and issue the appropriate ruling.

Note 2. If the publication of the matters mentioned in the above article concern a deceased person but is generally consider insult to his survivors, each of the legal heirs may make a legal claim in penal and legal terms in accordance with the above-mentioned article and note.

Article 38. The publication of such matters as threats to attack one's honor or dignity or reveal the secrets of a person is prohibited, and the responsible manager or the wife will be reported to the judicial courts and threatened in accordance with the punishment law.

Note: Regarding Articles 38 and 39 [as received], as long as the case is under investigation and examination, the journal does not have the right to publish any matter regarding the investigation. In the case of violations, the public prosecutor or the Press Oversight Committee must issue the warrant for the closure of the journal prior to the conclusion of investigations. This stoppage includes the first issue after the notification, and if repeated, the publication of the journal will be provided until the court ruling is issued.

Iran: Appointments to Some Offices Announced

96LA0089A Tehran KEYHAN-E HAVA'I in Persian 13, 20 Sep, 11, 18, 25 Oct, 15, 22 Nov, 6 Dec

[20 Sep 95, p 3]

[FBIS Translated Text] On the suggestion of the minister of foreign affairs and the approval of the president, in separate decrees, Morteza Rahimi-Zarchi was appointed ambassador extraordinaire and fully authorized representative of Iran to Yemen and Dr. Mohammad Reza Amirkhizi as the ambassador and permanent representative of Iran in the Office of the United Nations and the international organizations in Vienna. The minister of foreign affairs also chose Naser Jasebi as the general director of protocol of the ministry and Mohammad Mehdi Sazgar as his advisor.

Dr. Hamid Mirzadeh, the director of the Plan and Budget Organization, in separate decrees appointed Javad Farshbat-Maherian, the director general of the Center for Economic and Social Documents of this organization, as the deputy for logistics and regional affairs. He also chose Farhad Dezhpasand, the deputy general director of the General Higher Education and Research Office of the organization, as his advisor and general director of the Office of the Director and Evaluation.

[13 Sep 95, p 3]

[FBIS Translated Text] In separate decrees issued by the minister of interior, Messrs Gholamreza Javdan, Mansur Gomshadzehi, 'Ali Tavakkoli-'Anbarani, and 'Ali Asghar Mirshekari were appointed as the governors of the cities of Khash, Iranshahr, Zahedan, and Chahbahar, respectively, in the province of Sistan and Baluchestan and also Mohammad 'Ali Shadnush as the governor of the city of Garmsar.

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In a decree issued by Pirmoradian, the director general of news broadcasting of the Voice and Vision Organization, Mustafa Mohammadi was appointed as the chief editor of sports news.

[11 Oct 95, p 3]

[FBIS Translated Text] In separate decrees by the director of the ideological-political organization of the Military of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Hojjat ol-Eslam Movahhedi-Golpayegani was appointed as the director of the ideological-political office of the Joint Military Headquarters.

Upon the suggestion of the minister of foreign affairs and the approval of the president, 'Abolreza Farajirad was appointed as the ambassador extraordinaire and fully-authorized representative of Iran to Hungary.

Dr. Mirzadeh, the deputy to the president and the director of the Plan and Budget Organization, issuing a decree appointing Engineer Mehdi Tafazzoli as the deputy director for technical affairs of that organization.

He also chose Engineer Mohammad Mehdi Khalili as his advisor.

In separate decrees issued by Engineer Shafti, the general manager of the Airlines of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Seyyed Gholamhoseyn Hasantash was appointed as the logistics deputy, Abolfazl Angoshtbaf as the advisor to the general manager, and Hushang Nasri as the general director of Homa Management Section.

[18 Oct 95, p 3]

[FBIS Translated Text] In separate decrees issued by Engineer Mohammad Reza Ne'matzadeh, the minister of industries, Dr. 'Ali Akbar Golafshani was appointed as the chairman of the board of directors and general manager of Ehdas-e San'at Company, Dr. Mohammad Reza Omidkhah as the director of the Yunid Office of the Ministry of Industries, and Mohammad Bakhshi as a member of the Export Council of the Ministry of Industries.

Dr. 'Ali Reza Marandi, the minister of health, treatment and medical education, issuing separate decrees, appointed Dr. Ashrafossadat Sane'i as the deputy for research and Dr. Mohammad Pazhuhi (former deputy for research) as the deputy for educational affairs.

'Ali Mohammad Besharati, the minister of interior, made seven new appointments at the level of governor. The new appointees and their positions are as follows: Gholamreza 'Atufi, governor of Shahr-e Rey; Seyyed Mohammad Bateni, governor of Shahrud; Hoseyn 'Alizadeh, governor of Bardeskan; Shahrokh Mansuri, governor of Eslamabad-e Gharb; Javad Sadeqi, governor of Darrehshahr; 'Ali Akbar Nasiri, governor of Varamin; and Esfandiar Gilyusefian, governor of Bandar Torkaman.

In a decree issued by Ayatollah Jannati, the head of the Council of Representatives of the Grand Leader of the Revolution in the Universities, Hojjat ol-Eslam 'Ali Reza Panahian was appointed as the head of the institution in the Honar University.

Dr. Hashemi-Golpayegani, the minister of culture and education, following the resignation of Dr. Mirmehdi Seyyed-Esfahani and Dr. Seyyed Mohammad E'temadi, the presidents of the Teacher Training and Sharif Industrial Universities in order to be candidates for the Fifth Majles, replaced them with Dr. 'Abbas 'Ali Taslimi and Dr. Khatib ol-Eslam Sadrnezhad. He also appointed Dr. Taqi Ebtekar as the head of the Applied Sciences Faculty of the Supreme Council of Planning of this ministry.

[25 Oct 95, p 3]

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati, the minister of foreign affairs, appointed Gholam'ali Khoshru as the dean of the College of International Relations of this ministry.

In a decree issued by Engineer Akhundi, the minister of housing and urban development, Seyyed Majid Borhani was appointed as the deputy minister of housing and urban development and the general manager of the Organization for the Implementation of Government and Public Buildings and Facilities.

Dr. Mirzadeh, the director of the Plan and Budget Organization, issuing separate decrees, selected Ahmad Mirza'i as the deputy for financial and administrative affairs and Mohammad 'Ali Majidi as the director general of the Office of Physical Education and Sports of the Plan and Budget Organization.

[15 Nov 95, p 3]

[FBIS Translated Text] In separate decrees by Dr. Hamid Mirzadeh, the director of the Plan and Budget Organization, Dr. Samad Mo'men-Bellahfard was appointed as the director general of the Office of Research, Bahman Vakili as the director general of the Office of Management Training and Services, Mehdi Pazuki as the general director of the Center for Economic and Social Documents and Publications, and Hamid Haji 'Abdolvahab as the director general of the General Affairs Office of this organization.

[22 Nov 95, p 3]

[FBIS Translated Text] Upon the suggestion of the minister of foreign affairs and the approval of the

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president, Ahmad A'lamol-Hoda and Seyyed Mehdi Faridzadeh were appointed as the ambassadors of Iran to Namibia and the United Nations, respectively.

Dr. Mirzadeh, the director of the Plan and Budget Organization, issuing a decree, appointed Dr. 'Ali Akbar 'Arabmazar, an associate professor of Shahid Beheshti University and the former dean of the Economic Sciences College of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance, as the director general of the Office of Microeconomics of the Plan and Budget Organization.

Dr. Hashemi-Golpayegani, the minster of culture and higher education, conferred the new supervision of Lorestan University on Dr. Ardeshir Khaza'i.

Also, during the week honoring the status of women, he issued a decree appointing Dr. Tuba Kermani as his advisor on women's affairs.

[6 Dec 95, p 3]

[FBIS Translated Text] In a decree issued by Dr. Hashemi-Golpayegani, the minister of culture and higher education, Dr. Mohsen Haddad-Sabzevari was appointed as the head of Sabzevar Teacher Training University.

The minister of roads and transport issued a decree appointing Mostafa Hushyar as the dean of the Aviation Technology College.

The minister of Islamic culture and guidance conferred the task of director general of coordination and follow-up for provincial affairs of this ministry on Mohammad Rasul Zandi.

The minister of economic affairs and finance in a decree appointed Mohammad Parizi as the director general of indirect taxes.

In a separate decree by Dr. 'Ali Larijani, the director of the Voice and Vision Organization, Messrs Mohsen Purnejati, 'Ali Reza Amini, and 'Ali Asghar She'rdust were appointed as members and Messrs Salehi-Murkani and Mohseni as alternate members of the board of directors of Sorush Publications.

In a decree issued by Hojjat ol-Eslam Seyyed 'Ali Reza Sadr, the director of the Council of the Representatives of the Grand Leader of the Revolution in the Universities, Hojjat ol-Eslam Seyyed Mohsen Sadat-Kia'i was appointed as the representative of the grand leader of the revolution at 'Allameh Tabataba'i University.

Iran: Ansar-e Hezbollah Condemns University Incident

96LA0090A Tehran KEYHAN-E HAVA'I in Persian 1 Nov 95 p 8

[FBIS Translated Text] **Tehran, KEYHAN-E HAVA'I NEWS SERVICE, 6 Aban/28 October—Two members of Ansar-e Hezbollah in a press conference, referring to the recent incident at the Technical College of the University of Tehran, announced: We condemn the confrontation created in the Technical College during the speech by Dr. Sorush and deny responsibility for the disturbance of this session.**

Hoseynollah Karam, a member of Ansar-e Hezbollah, in this news conference, pointing out that religious guardianship is the pillar of the Constitution and separation of religion from politics is an illegal and anti-religious action, said: We believe that Sorush, with his thesis of separation of religion from politics and saying that we cannot have a religious government, has violated this law, whereas we want the implementation of the law.

He denied any kind of reaction to Dr. Sorush and his being beaten by the Ansar-e Hezbollah and said: Only four of the members of our group, who wanted order in the session, were present during the speech at the Technical College.

Rejecting the claim of someone close to Dr. Sorush regarding the announcement of conditions for debate, he said: Sorush has said that he is only prepared to have a debate with the scholars from the seminary, whereas he himself is not a religious scholar but an academician.

Mas'ud Dehnamaki, another member of Ansar-e Hezbollah, said in this connection: In our opinion, the rational solution is for Dr. Sorush to accept the invitation to debate by the university professors, and in this connection, so far, Dr. Turani, Dr. Ghaffari, and Dr. Larijani have declared their readiness to debate Dr. Sorush.

Warning to Westernized Capitalists

Also, on 4 Aban [26 October] this year, hundreds of Ansar-e Hezbollah members gathered in front of the "White Tower" located on Pasdaran Street in Tehran and marched, shouting slogans against capitalism and the spread of Western culture.

On their route to Mohseni Square in Tehran, the marchers shouted slogans such as "The affluent who have no pain are the agents of corruption," "The corrupt culture of the West must be condemned," "The affluent who have no pain are the enemies of the revolution," and

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"Islam without religious guardianship is a destructive idea."

Communique of the Islamic Society of the Medical Science Students of the University of Tehran

The Islamic Society of Medical Science Students of the University of Tehran issued a communique in connection with the incidents at the Technical College and the gathering of students on 3 Aban [25 October] at the University of Tehran and asked the officials to make decisions to prevent the sanctity of the university from being harmed.

Iranian Elections

Iran: Wide Election Participation, Political Coexistence

96LA0090B Tehran KEYHAN-E HAVA'I in Persian 1 Nov 95 pp 12-13, 18

["Roundtable discussion" concerning Majles elections with deputies Mohsen Yahyavi, Elyas Hazrati, Morteza Nabavi, and Mohammad Qomi]

[FBIS Translated Text] **With the approach of the final months of the year, discussions about the elections of the Fifth Majles increase every day in the political circles of the country. In the meantime, everyone is unanimous that the conditions must be spelled out in a way that will result in the maximum participation of the people in the elections. The strong presence of the people in various political scenes after the revolution indicates the presence of the collective will and high political consciousness in the country. Undoubtedly, this issue is considered one of the most important gains of the Islamic revolution. Hence, efforts to preserve and promote incentives in the society for the participation of the people in their political destiny is a grave duty on the shoulders of everyone, especially the officials. In other words, the necessary decisions must be made to eliminate any sort of factor that weakens the presence of the people in the political scene of the country.**

Considering the status and place of the Majles in the regime of the Islamic Republic, its elections can prepare the suitable grounds for the manifestation of the political will of the society, and according to what was said, the best possible conditions must be provided for participation. For this reason, in order to evaluate the existing conditions and offer ways to prepare the grounds the best way possible, we invited the honorable deputies of the Majles, Messrs Mohsen Yahyavi, Elyas Hazrati, Morteza Nabavi, and Mohammad Qomi, to participate in the KEYHAN-E HAVA'I roundtable discussion about this issue. What follows is the result of this meeting.

[KEYHAN-E HAVA'I] Undoubtedly, "elections" are one of the important arenas for the political and destiny-making participation in the society, and holding sound elections in which people can manifest their political will by electing their deputies to the Majles is considered one of the great developments. At the present, there is a great deal of discussion about the procedures to hold sound elections in our country, because we have the Fifth Majles elections before us. As usual, there are differing opinions in this regard. Some believe in the existence of certain conditions, and some find it inappropriate. If you allow us, we will start our discussion from this point. What do you consider the suitable conditions for sound elections?

[Yahyavi (deputy from Tehran)] Elections, particularly the Majles elections, are especially important, because as a result of them a group of people come to the Majles and devise and ratify the law in order to determine the framework of the actions of the regime. Undoubtedly, the quality of the implementation of elections and the percentage of people's participation determines the relationship between the people and the regime. Of course, the importance of this issue is no less than the first. As you know, foreigners and those who calculate based on the legitimacy of the regime pay attention to this point, which is, what percentage of the people participate in the elections. If we take these two issues into consideration, then we realize the importance of this discussion and the necessity of finding clear results. For example, what conditions must we provide so that, in addition to everyone's presence in the elections, people are elected who have sufficient capability to take the Majles seats and assume this responsibility, considering the specialization of the issues, and who are not affiliated with any particular faction? We must prepare the grounds in such a way as to assure the freedom of all those who consider themselves competent in this regard. Of course, by taking into consideration the minimum qualifications that a Majles deputy must have, in this connection, certainly there exists an authority for study and supervision. With the grace of God, we can claim that we are almost the only country in which the people can present their candidates and vote as well.

In my opinion, we have been able to hold the kind of elections that are intended by the leader and are also in the interest of this regime, and as a result, any sort of creation of confusion among the people that there are no free elections or rumors that the participation of groups and individuals in the elections is not free, which will result in a decrease in the presence of the people in the elections, is treason to the revolution.

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Subsequently, the clear answer to your question is that we must create a calm climate for the people in order not to disturb their sense of security, to ensure their free presence in the election scene and, God forbid, not inculcate in the people that if the conditions are thus and so, they can participate in the elections and not otherwise. Such actions are only striking blows on the regime and are not in line with religious guardianship, because the line of the religious guardian is that the people must not become disappointed. Rather, they must be encouraged to participate, especially in the elections. In the implementation and campaigns, we must not do anything that will weaken this presence.

[Nabavi (deputy from Tehran)] A good Majles is a Majles in which the representatives of the political ideas and currents are present. In other words, a good course for the elections is one in which the political currents and organizations—of course, not in the manner of the West—are actively present. We hope that gradually political currents other than those with an active presence have their own clear positions and programs, so that the people can vote for their positions, programs, and ideas more than voting for the individuals, and it becomes clear what ideas and programs a particular contingent will follow if it gains a majority in the Majles. On the whole, we should have a sort of goal in the Majles in order for the actions of the deputies to be evaluated. Believing and having practical obligation to religious guardianship requires that major political currents in particular have an active and serious presence in the elections. In order to have sound elections, it is very important to have careful supervision. Violations may take place, which the judicial organizations must take timely actions to prevent. Of course, in addition to the instances that are prevented by the supervisory organization (the Council of Guardians), in my opinion, the role of the media and the press also must not be ignored in creating the suitable conditions for elections, because they can make the people understand the importance of the participation of the people in the elections and what effect even one vote can have. Hence, the role of the media is important. The media can make the people hopeful and guide them and, by creating a positive atmosphere, raise the positive sense of religious, national, and legal duty in all members of the nation to participate in the elections. The Majles, in fact, in some way also determines the fate of the country. If a Majles deputy defends the ideas of his own faction, it is not a crime. As I said, it is better for the individuals and groups who participate in the elections to be, in fact, representatives of clear ideologies, programs, and positions.

[Yahyavi] Everyone has an economic and political position in regards to internal and external affairs, and certainly a person who votes for a proposal or bill examines it through an expert viewpoint, because expert perspectives differ on determining the policies and frameworks. You specify a framework and idea earlier and then engage in expert study.

[Nabavi] Our friends may create a climate in which if a person is connected with a faction, he must be restricted. At the present, perhaps in the executive organization, as soon as it is said that some person is from a certain faction, he is immediately rejected. They spread such a climate in the society that belonging to one party or one political current is against the values.

[Qomi (deputy from Varamin)] One of the very important factors in the victory of the revolution and its continuation is the presence of the people. Certainly, the joyful and strong presence of the people in the election scene can solve the problems. The Imam and the leader also had such an opinion, that the people must become political. Ayatollah Khamene'i said in connection with the universities last year: God curse those who do not want and do not allow the students to become political. Naturally, students are a spectrum in this society. The requirement for the survival of the regime is also for the people to become political. If we look at history, we see that many people on the surface performed their prayers and fasted, but because of lack of political common sense, they did not have a correct understanding of the social issues. They attacked Imam 'Ali. They rebelled against Imam Hoseyn. The political understanding and common sense of the people can solve many of the problems. In the beginning of the Islamic revolution, 98.2 percent of the people voted for the Constitution. Efforts must be made to bring this ratio close to 100 percent. The farther we are from this ratio, the more problems will be created in the sense that we have not been able to keep the people on the scene. In fact, elections for candidates are like scientific competitions or athletic matches. We want rivals who can confront each other and have the necessary health and advantages in these competitions. In my opinion, the three branches of the government that make up the regime must create a climate in which competent people and those who believe in the revolution, the regime, and religious guardianship are able to register with ease of mind in the Majles elections. Previously, there were differences between the Council of Guardians and the Ministry of Interior regarding the law that have now been resolved in some manner, and all the affairs are entrusted to the Council of Guardians. As the arbiter, this Council wants to be the implementor of the law. In other words, in addition to supervision, it will also appoint the executive committee. Hence, full authority is given to the Council of Guardians and this is ratified

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by the Majles. As far as I know, for the next elections, the Supervisory Committee of the provinces will be selected from individuals who have been present previously and are from a particular spectrum. Hence, they cannot be impartial, and this can poison the climate and create problems. If you remember, the differences regarding the Third Majles elections reached such a point that the late Imam personally intervened and assigned the late Haj Ahmad Aqa to examine the problems. In any case, the creation of a sound political climate for the elections depends on having a suitable campaign atmosphere. In other words, various factions should have equal resources. If radio and television are placed at the disposal of one faction or group, they will take advantage of it. In the press conferences that are arranged, the opposing spectrum must also be present. The president, as the highest executive authority of the government, warned in the Cabinet that impartiality must be observed in the elections and the climate not be poisoned. This indicates that some actions have taken place, and certain currents in the country may harm the soundness of the elections. The government, the Majles, the press, and radio and television must prevent bad propaganda against individuals, so as not to poison the election climate. The Majles is the essence of the people; it must encompass all the people. Participation in the elections is the duty of everyone. Hence, upon the recommendation and last will and testament of the late imam and the emphasis of the grand leader, we must prepare the conditions and resources in a way that people come to the election scene more joyfully and enthusiastically.

[Hazrati (deputy from Rasht)] Before defining the sound climate, we must see under what conditions we want to hold the elections, and what is a proper atmosphere from our perspective. Do we intend to have elections in which only one ideological current wins? Then the elections may be sound, with no interference taking place in them. The people might vote and, as a result, elect certain deputies from one spectrum to come to the Majles.

We must see in what climate and with what preparations and ideas such sound elections are held. We might want all the groups who are from the family of the revolution or those who were hostile to the revolution and whose treason became clear after the revolution to be present on the scene and to create a mere liberal climate or, on the contrary, bring in groups and concerned individuals and factions whose movement is within the framework of the revolution. In a suitable environment, contemplative and experienced individuals should be brought to the scene and made known to the people in order to engage in the political campaign. If we accept that all the offspring and allies and forces of the revolution and the factions are divided in a way that they have differing ideas, but are all in line with the revolution and the general interests of the regime and follow the leader, then we will not be narrow-minded and will not believe that only I am obedient to the religious guardian and accept the regime, and all those who support me are on this course, but if they do not support me, they are against religious guardianship and against the clerics. What is meant by suitable conditions is the creation of a climate in which the concerned, thinking, sound, truthful, and competent forces can easily and freely offer their ideas to the Majles, but unfortunately, the outside climate is different, which must be broken. In fact, we must create the grounds for individuals to enter the scene rather than avoid participation. Of course, elections have always been coupled with enthusiasm, and we must value the presence of the people in them, but if we are unable to create the grounds for the participation of the political factions, the condition for the soundness of the elections will not be provided. Another important issue is the necessity of impartiality in the elections. In order to achieve this important matter, those who supervise the elections must be selected from fair individuals who do not impose a particular viewpoint. Ultimately, if we do have not a proper understanding of the Fourth Majles elections and repeat the weaknesses that existed in them, in my opinion, we will not be very successful in creating a proper atmosphere for the elections. History lights the path of the future, and past experiences can be useful in eliminating the likely obstacles in the future.

[KEYHAN-E HAVA'I] In connection with the necessity for the political coexistence of the existing factions, do you accept that these factions in the formation of the Third and Fourth Majleses moved somewhat beyond the line of religious guardianship in dealing with each other's political mistakes? In other words, in the Third Majles, one faction made a political error in connection with the principles of the revolution, and the religious guardian made a reminder to this faction. In this case, the other faction took maximum undue advantage of the issue, causing the opposite faction to receive a deadly blow. Considering these problems, do you agree on that point, that in connection with political coexistence, both in the Third Majles elections and the Fourth Majles elections, we had weaknesses? Do you accept this issue regarding both factions?

[Nabavi] Considering your statements, I think you are among those people who wish neither of these factions would exist.

[KEYHAN-E HAVA'I] We believe that the two political currents have very sound and good elements and also unsound elements.

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[Qomi] He is right.

[Nabavi] He is now condemning both currents and out to find a third line.

[KEYHAN-E HAVA'I] Do not make a prejudgment. That is not what is meant. Both factions at a certain time in the Third and Fourth Majleses committed certain errors.

[Nabavi] On the whole, the Imam made certain statements, and one faction made use of those statements. It is debatable whether we want to make reminders or question someone, but after these events, the late imam endorsed both factions (the Militant Clergy Association [Jameh-ye Rowhaniyyat-e Mobarez] and the Militant Clerics Society [Majma'e Rowhaniyyun-e Mobarez]), in response to the letter of Mr Ansari. In any case, I do not believe that if some instances have not been observed regarding one faction, they have not been observed concerning only one faction.

[KEYHAN-E HAVA'I] We have had two experiences in the area of political participation. We want to see whether these two experiences have been sufficiently beneficial for the two factions, because if the basis of their political experiences is obstinacy, these factions will not be inclined to abandon their unsound elements.

[Nabavi] If the discussion is on peaceful coexistence between the factions or currents, we experienced it very well in the Fourth Majles. I believe that the Third Majles was not fully at the disposal of the Militant Clerics Society faction. No, a minority faction of the Militant Clergy Association were in the Majles. In the Fourth Majles also, it is the same. The majority belongs to the Militant Clergy Association, but a minority of the Militant Clerics Society is also present. In the Majles, under the present management, we have peaceful coexistence and very friendly relations with each other, and everyone has his own opinion.

[Yahyavi] In other words, the issues are dealt with expertly without taking into consideration the factional viewpoints.

[Nabavi] Even taking into consideration factional positions, which can also be just, we have had good relations. In some instances, an issue has been raised by the minority faction which has received votes with the defense by others. I think that at the present, the experiences that you referred to have been sufficiently utilized. It seems to me that our society has achieved such a level of growth that factions must not only tolerate each other but have a good relationship as well and have ideological and not physical confrontation. This has even spread to a great extent to our universities. In other words, in the universities, too, you see that various factions have good relations with each other. These are experiences that the revolution and the regime have gained, and I think peaceful coexistence has been established. We have reached this level of evolution.

[Hazrati] The existing groups and factions have not yet reached political maturity. I myself may belong to one faction, but, as God is my witness, so far I have tried to state my ideas based on my duty. The minimum requirement for political maturity is that we hold the interests of the regime over the interests of the faction. Another point that is almost natural in political competition is that the factions take advantage of various opportunities in their own interests, but the problem arises when one group uses the statements of the grand leader as a weapon against the rival and, on that basis, uses certain interpretations for propaganda purposes.

For one thing, it closes the path to the rival and does not allow him to enter the scene. These two issues must be separated. In campaign rivalry, moral principles dictate to us to state our strong points and our views rather than belittle our rival in order to use the unpleasant political climate to promote groups and factions destroying one another.

Here we can see the differences between the Third and Fourth Majles elections. In the Third Majles elections, the Militant Clerics Society faction took proper, or according to some improper, advantage of the famous statement of the imam against the Militant Clergy Association faction. In the Fourth Majles elections, the Militant Clergy Association used the statements of the leader against its rival faction, but it is not true that in the Third Majles [elections], by resorting to the statements of the late imam, 20 or 30 people were omitted from the list of candidates of the Militant Clergy Association.

However, in the Fourth Majles [elections], the names of the applicants for deputyship were omitted. Hence the actions of the two factions in the Third and Fourth Majles elections have become clear. In my opinion, what these two factions have in common exceeds their differences, but the differences have always governed the situation. We always try to look for differences, but if we think properly, our common points on essential issues are many, and in the viewpoints of the majority of the two factions, the ideas of the Imam have a special place. If we think about what the two factions have in common, many of the problems will be resolved.

[Yahyavi] In peaceful dealing with our rivals, we can obtain results when all the factions have tolerance for the opinions of the opposite side. If we are able to follow this course, so that groups can say what they have to say, often it may be very logical and may

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be accepted by the rivals. We must avoid spreading falsified information and as much as possible repeating it after we are certain about its correctness. When it is said that a faction eliminated some people and set a number of people aside, it means that those selected by the religious guardian who are the religious jurists of the Council of Guardians, and also that the legal experts in this council all belong to one faction, in my opinion, one must question such a report. When it is said that 40, 50, or 60 people were eliminated from the previous elections, this is a report, the correctness of which is not acceptable, one which only serves to weaken morale and reduce the participation of the people in the elections, and I do not consider it in our interest to discuss it. With regard to making legitimate use of the statements of the imam and the grand leader as a standard and criterion in elections, there is no problem. Now, let us discuss the legitimate competitions after the elections. Suppose in the Majles that will be formed, one group gains a majority and another becomes the minority. By preserving this position within the specific framework, these groups announce their internal and external policies and national economy during the elections. As Mr. Nabavi pointed out, we experienced a peaceful method alongside each other in the Fourth Majles. A proposal or bill is discussed in the Majles by both groups. Suppose there is a third group in the Majles as well that expresses its opinions. We know certainly that the proposals and bills on the agenda of the Majles are carefully examined, and every group offers its views separately.

In some decisions and issues related to factional lines, group prejudices may govern. In any case, in continuing this discussion, I point out that there are prejudgments that must not be propagated, because they will certainly give an excuse to various groups and prevent the active presence of various strata in the elections. The president emphasized that the ministries and other related organizations must not interfere in the elections, and Mr. Qomi concluded that there must have been some interference for the president to make such a statement. In my opinion, this understanding of yours is not correct. It is enough for the groups to complain to the president that certain actions in connection with the elections are about to occur, and for the president to take a position and announce that none of these individuals have the right to engage in such actions, as a preventive measure, and at least to announce his position vis-a-vis opposite views and offer this recommendation, rather than saying that certainly a case exists to cause the president to emphasize not interfering in the future elections. Some rulings are issued for the purpose of prevention and in order to look into the future. Stating that the Supervisory Committee and the executive officials have factional tendencies, especially given the composition of the executive organization, at least during the Fourth Majles, does not seem correct. One of the attributes of the president is that he used forces in the executive organization in the positions of governors general, governors, etc., who were from various factions. Here, I remind you of a statement by the former minister of interior. In response to a question regarding the reason for changing the governors general, he had said: I tried to have 50 percent from the other faction. Considering the composition of the factions in the executive organization, the recommendation of the president is just. We cannot say that a person belonging to this faction should not take a position in one direction, or a person from the other faction is not qualified to take another position, but when a position is conferred on him, he should not use his position to implement the objectives of his faction. Of course, it is a just recommendation, but if we want to pass judgment from now that the Supervisory Committee and the members of the Council of Guardians are selected by the grand leader, and we have no doubt about it, but the committees that are chosen for the provinces may not be sufficiently firm, this issue was evident in the Fourth Majles elections. If a deputy had an objection, the Supervisory Committee was informed, and in the capital, the Council of Guardians expressed its views about it. Creating similar campaign resources for the deputies, in my opinion, is something that must certainly be done. Of course, there are conditions that impose themselves and cannot be eliminated. He says, if a group meets with the president or a member of a faction meets with the president, a similar meeting must also be arranged with the members of the opposite group, which of course is not possible. In fact, some issues are related to the jobs of the individuals. For example, as a Majles deputy, I have the right to express my opinion about the proposals and bills and make pre-agenda speeches, etc. This is a part of my job and responsibility. Now, is it proper to say that we must also provide the opportunity for a person who is not in the Majles now and is not among the deputies but is considered an election rival, to have similar resources to come to the Majles or travel to various provinces once in a while to visit with the people? Now, someone might say, why should such visits be allowed the speaker of the Majles, while a person from some faction is not able to benefit from such trips? No, if the speaker of the Majles does not go among the people and does not become familiar with their problems first hand, this would be wrong. Certainly, when he goes to certain areas of the country, the news of his visit is published and broadcast through the media. Hence, there is no discrimination, but creating equal conditions does not mean that we should

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not also consider the professional, political, and social requirements of the individuals.

[KEYHAN-E HAVA'I] We think that the central point of the discussion is the issue of supervision and the verification of the qualifications of the candidates at the start of the elections. We are all unanimous that, in any case, there has to be supervision. Now, some agree and believe that supervision is in accordance with the standards and others believe that this issue is not within the necessary framework. The issue is that we should know how you want to implement the necessary framework. If we accept that there has to be supervision, a series of conditions will necessarily exist as well, on the basis of which the Council of Guardians will determine competency. How do we implement this and build the framework so that the mistakes that you believe have happened will not happen again. I must also add one point to this issue. Sometimes we set a series of conditions for the candidates which are quite clear. For example, we say, these are the requirements for being a candidate: "25 or 30 years of age, Iranian citizenship, educational degree, etc." These instances are quite clear. In other words, no matter what my beliefs, if I look at your birth certificate, I can neither say that you are younger or older, because the information on the birth certificate is clear. But a series of conditions depends on how the overseers understand and interpret them. Hence, one of the problems is that what can be interpreted has not been clearly defined. We say that one of the conditions is practical obligation to religious guardianship. I may interpret practical obligation in one way, and you may have another understanding. In any case, the issues must be specified, so that no one can deviate from that framework.

[Qomi] In the past, regarding the selection of the supervisory committees, certain incidents occurred in many provinces that are worthy of contemplation. All individuals have ideological leanings, and it is natural for them to have tendencies. But one issue we are discussing is, when in a city or province the clear and distinct opinions of a faction are discussed as those of the members of a supervisory committee, it indicates that, in any case, a particular spectrum pursues the matters. This is no longer prejudgment.

[Yahyavi] Do you mean this was the case in Tehran?

[Qomi] The Council of Guardians must, within the framework of its duties, select a committee as the Supervisory Committee, but it can select its members in a way that there are no persons distinguished by their affiliation with any particular faction. This council may introduce a number of people from among the scholars and combatants who at least are independent in their opinion, that is, earlier experience has not proven that these individuals have carried the banner of a particular faction. This is what we say.

[KEYHAN-E HAVA'I] Considering the characteristics of the members of the Council of Guardians, if our interpretation is that these individuals will not step outside the circle of piety and will, on the basis of their understanding and knowledge, merely select the best for membership in the Supervisory Committees, then we face an issue of belief, which is not necessarily factional but stems from the beliefs and understanding of the members of the Council of Guardians. Given such an interpretation, do you find a solution for preventing some of the problems that were discussed?

[Qomi] Of course, there are shortcomings in the laws. For example, in terms of time, sufficient time is not given for investigation by the Council of Guardians. In one of the Friday prayer sermons, Mr. Jannati pointed out in regards to the elections that there is too little time. Hence, because there is a short time for investigation, naturally the Council of Guardians puts its trust in a series of other people, and this, in any case, reduces the coefficient of trust which has these results. Otherwise, it is not true to say that, for instance, the religious jurists of the Council of Guardians have a particular viewpoint and want the elections to take a particular course.

[Hazrati] While I believe that the members of the honorable Council of Guardians are just people and their decisions are not based on factions, one part of the issue I think is problematic, and that is the regulations that must exist in the preliminary steps for the elections. I have pointed out earlier that for a vital issue such as the Majles elections, approved supervision is necessary in order for the Council of Guardians not to be merely an onlooker and ordinary observer of the elections, but the method of involvement in the matter and judgment about the issue is like a judge having a case before him. The judge cannot bring in his feelings and personal perceptions in judging. In this case, too, the issue is the same. Hence, the judge's hands are not free, and he is obliged to rely on the evidence within a legal framework. We must specify those regulations in detail. The Council of Guardians may reject the qualifications of one person. There is no problem in this, but it must be clear for what reason his qualifications are rejected.

It is one thing when as a member of the Supervisory Committee or the Council of Guardians I have a feeling on the matter, but it is another when the evidence dictates it. Of course, the evidence could be withheld from being revealed in order to protect the reputation of a person, but the person himself must be told that the documents and evidence exist. Certainly, merely

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telling a person, I feel it in my heart that you are against religious guardianship, is not acceptable.

Another important point regarding approved supervision, which I specifically support, is that that group of friends who criticize approved supervision must realize that they should not look at this issue merely within the framework of the relationship of the two existing factions. There could be many people and groups lacking competence who are ready for the conditions to be provided for them to infiltrate the elections, which is by no means in the interest of the country and the revolution. Under these circumstances, the Council of Guardians, having the right of approved supervision, prevents the presence of those individuals and groups in the elections.

In any case, at the present, unfortunately, the situation is such that on the political arena of the country, we merely see each other. In any case, in order to gain peace of mind in terms of correctness, the opinion of the Council of Guardians and the Supervisory Committee is necessary in order to present the reasons for rejecting the competence of individuals, specifically and based on evidence, at least to the individuals themselves. Of course, there are general guidelines on which candidates lack the qualifications to become Majles deputies, including addicts, those affiliated with the Rastakhiz Party, counterrevolutionary groups, outlaws, etc. These issues are clear to some extent, and the reason must be told, based on evidence, to individuals who lack the qualifications.

[KEYHAN-E HAVA'I] Some cases can be clearly documented and proven, for instance, if a person is financially or morally corrupt or affiliated politically with the previous regime. Such cases can be documented. But some other cases go back to our ideological perspective. For instance, whether or not a statement or action is considered to be against religious guardianship. One may say yes, and another may say no. In fact, this is the problem. For this reason, in such cases, clear and precise definitions must exist. In other words, it should be specified in detail and precisely what is meant by practical obligation to religious guardianship, and the characteristics of a lack of this obligation must also be clearly defined, so that it is not subject to interpretation, even though it is not possible to absolutely eliminate the possibility of individual understanding from this issue.

[Yahyavi] I think the point that Mr. Hazrati made is true, and of course it is somewhat different from the issue you raised. He says that it should not be that a person is rejected merely because of what I think or guess concerning his qualifications. Rather, this should not be the case, and only what is in accordance with the regulations and is documented must be used to approve or reject a candidate. Now, there are a variety of these documents. As you pointed out, such evidence must be specified and categorized, but at the same time, it is not possible to do this 100 percent. Suppose a person commits a crime and is fined an amount or jailed for a period of time. Some of these depend on the determination and consideration of the decision maker. In other words, the issues cannot always be specified precisely and perfectly, but if the person that you choose to issue rulings on the basis of these documents is a just and pious person, who in his decisions would not consider anything but God, many of the problems will be solved. The problem that is posed by the gentleman is that the person who wants to make a decision must not bring his factional perspective into decision making. That is, suppose that when he sees the evidence, he were to say that, if it concerns a person from his own faction, he would be somewhat lenient, but would increase the punishment in regards to someone from the opposite faction. In other words, if the person that we choose is pious and announces his decision only to please God, all individuals are equal to him. Of course, in my opinion, a person's own understanding cannot be prevented. Everyone has a different understanding. If we consider a group of people who hear about an issue, when they want to vote, they have a different understanding and judgment in the same way that a judge may not accept the opinion of another judge and not consider a ruling to be in full compliance with an article of the penal law.

[KEYHAN-E HAVA'I] It seems that we have discussed the issue of supervision sufficiently, and various opinions have been examined. The issue of supervision, however, is a part of the election issue, and other issues in this connection must also be discussed.

In the beginning of this discussion, the necessity of a sound climate for elections was emphasized. Among the important factors in establishing a sound climate is the existence of sound publicity in the society. On the one hand, it is seen that, on the whole, political factions in the course of their activities in any case compel a part of the society to lean towards them and normally benefit from the resources of this spectrum during the elections. We might say that this is natural and cannot be prevented. The issue that is raised here is that, under such circumstances, undoubtedly differences will be created in the publicity capabilities of the two sides, and the superior publicity capability of one group compared to the other, due to having more financial resources and equipment, may draw the society toward a particular direction and harm the sound climate. How can such a situation be prevented from arising?

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[Yahyavi] The new election law has eliminated this problem. This law has restricted publicity connected with the individual and group resources in a manner that no candidate can have more than one election headquarters. Hence, in order to prevent what you said, legal restrictions have been created, and more opportunities have been provided for those who have fewer resources.

[KEYHAN-E HAVA'I] Are the anticipated measures sufficient to prevent the problems that were stated? Certainly, financial and publicity issues can be very effective in the course of the elections. Some, due to some publicity limitations, do not see any possibility of victory for themselves, whether or not their qualifications are approved, and hence do not enter the election campaign.

[Hazrati] The problem that we have regarding elections—which, of course, has its positive side—is lack of organized and established parties in the country. In other words, we have a parliamentary system minus a party system. The result is that, besides Tehran, in which the elections are similar to having parties, in the provincial cities, considering that their deputies make up the majority of the deputies in the Majles, it is the "individual" who presents himself to the Majles, and there is no talk of a program. Now the issue is, if there is a program, a different course is created in voting, but when the "individual" wants to present himself, naturally he resorts to other methods. In the provincial cities at the present time, we have individuals who enter the political arena, especially if the political climate, considering the discussion we had, is week, under such circumstances, what persons can be elected? Those who have more ability to take over the field. One of the important factors in this area is money. Fortunately, in the law, efforts are made to reduce the power of money in the elections to some extent. For instance, the printing of color posters was prohibited, even though three-color posters can be printed on various types of paper.

Or, it was decided that election headquarters must be restricted to one, but in this area too, it is possible for some individuals to decorate that one headquarters with signs and pictures and make it catch attention. Hence, you can see that the problem cannot be completely prevented. Certainly individuals who have neither the intellectual qualifications nor ability and experience or the necessary political experience are seen who want to take advantage of the existing climate in the society, and this is considered a danger. The weaker the presence of competent political groups, the more the number of these individuals will increase who are merely out for their own personal interests and, with the money that they spend, gain a determining role and control the scene. The solution is that we must move the elections in the direction of being based on values. A value-based political climate must be created in the society, and in this climate, we must have a Majles that acts on the basis of values. In my opinion, the political status of the Majles is higher than its legislative status. If we weaken the political status of the Majles, naturally, with every decision that is made in the law, ultimately, certain people will succeed and come to the Majles whose goal is to take advantage of the weak political climate of the society. We must move in a direction that encourages the possibility for the development of proposals and ideas in the society and see who has something to say rather than who has a large amount of money for publicity.

[Yahyavi] In my opinion, what is at issue as the characteristics of a deputy is such that no one has the courage to say that he does not have these characteristics and at the same time becomes a candidate for deputy of the Majles. The issues that are raised are the criteria that you call value criteria, but some people may not have the ability to present themselves, despite meeting the criteria, and those who have more financial resources present themselves more effectively to the society. At the same time, I believe that at the present time, some people are creating the grounds for presenting individuals who are indifferent to and do not meet the criteria for being a Majles deputy, in the sense that some are trying to propagate and publicize the issue of separation of religion from politics, in the sense that the person with such beliefs who is presented to the society as a possible deputy would not be rejected by the society. Based on this, they also question the clerics, and with this separation they want to inculcate the idea in the society that the clerics must be involved in seminary affairs and leave political and social affairs to the specialists. They are propagating these issues in a way that, when individuals who do not believe in the presence of the clerics on the political scene are discussed, they can make the society accept them. Also, they are trying to weaken religious guardianship, so that if they introduce someone who does not believe in religious guardianship, he can easily be accepted. They do all this, but they have not succeeded yet. If the forces that believe in the revolution and in these principles fail to strive to neutralize this conspiracy that we are gradually seeing being pursued in some newspapers, the same situation may be created which you are mentioning. While this has not occurred, even those who intend to take advantage of publicity must adjust themselves to the determined conditions and standards.

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[Qomi] As I said, people must be political. Political training states the first word in connection with elections. If people's political understanding is high—and in my opinion, many people's political understanding is high—in connection with the elections, naturally, they pay the necessary attention to values, and this is a principle. But considering the conditions that have been created, in any case, money has also gained status. For example, now a person who has money can send his child to a nonprofit school or the Open Islamic University. If a person has money, he can travel abroad, to Kish or other places. After all, the economic situation is such that the affluent can do certain things in the society. It is the same in the elections. For example, we see that some people have money and make a contract with the Post Office and pay several million tumans all at once and send their publicity by mail to the homes and various places, but someone else may not have such resources. In other words, in presenting his views, considering the time limitations that exist, problems occur, especially for the new candidates. Of course, the candidates from before are naturally somewhat better known in the region, but the new candidates must tolerate such expenses in order to make themselves known, and this requires money. Of course, this also has side effects, and a number of affluent people with capital may enter the scene and want to use their money to send someone to the Majles. Fortunately, in a meeting with the deputies, the leader of the revolution made a reminder for us to be careful. As Mr. Hazrati said, it is in a sound political climate that people can hold sound elections and choose their deputies.

[KEYHAN-E HAVA'I] We thank all the gentlemen for their participation in this roundtable discussion.

Iran: Tehran Mayor on Presidential Candidacy

96LA0087A Tehran KEYHAN-E HAVA'I in English 15 Nov 95 p 24

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran—An increasingly powerful Tehran Mayor Gholamhussein Karbaschi who is widely believed to be vying for the presidential seat did not rule out his candidacy for president.

Karbaschi who was addressing a press conference on the sidelines of Iran's First Seminar on Traffic Engineering said: "Please ask about traffic. The question of my being a presidential candidate has nothing to do with the traffic problem."

While Karbaschi may try to evade the issue, many political circles view his increasing influence and power as a consequence of his quest for the presidential seat.

"It is quite extraordinary to see the Tehran mayor attending all cabinet meetings. None of Karbaschi's predecessors were attending the cabinet meetings regularly," one observer noted.

Karbaschi, whose newspaper HAMSHAHRI was on the verge of being closed down after some MPs argued that the publication of the daily was contrary to the law forbidding departments and institutions affiliated to the government from publishing newspapers, exercised enough influence to get the Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Mustapha Mirsalim defending and finally saving his newspaper from closure in January this year.

Interior Minister Mohammad Ali Besharati who was once wont to challenge the Municipality has now turned into one of the mayor's firm supporters.

Tehran Municipality's numerous successes in its projects to beautify the capital seem to have to some extent overshadowed its negligence of some well-established norms in business and cultural affairs, yet still many observers believe that Karbaschi makes a better mayor than he would a politician.

Speculation is rife in the political circles that the possible contenders for the top executive post are Parliamentary Speaker Ali Akbar Nateq Nouri, First Vice-President Hasan Habibi, Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati, former presidential candidate Ahmad Tavakoli and Mayor Karbaschi.

The presidential elections are scheduled for 1997.

Pakistan

Pakistan: Borujerdi Holds Talks With Bhutto, Sheikh on Afghanistan

LD0802184396 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Expressing concern about the continuation of war in Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan have stressed the need for the two countries to continue their consultations to put an end to the clashes and establish peace in Afghanistan.

[Unidentifed correspondent in Islamabad] At a meeting today with our country's deputy foreign minister for Asia and Oceania, the Pakistani prime minister said: Continued consultation between the two country's officials could bring favorable results in that respect.

At the meeting the two sides agreed that another round of talks between the two countries should be held in Tehran in the near future.

Mrs Benazir Bhutto declared her country's readiness to normalize relations with Afghanistan, based on fundamental agreements. Mr. ['Ala'eddin] Borujerdi said:

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The Islamic Republic of Iran will continue its efforts to improve relations between Kabul and Islamabad.

Also at a meeting with Najmuddin Sheikh, the Pakistani deputy foreign minister, our country's deputy foreign minister for Asia and Oceania expressed gladness about the talks held between opposition groups and the Afghan government. He expressed his concern about the possibility of a fresh Taleban attack on Kabul.

The Pakistani official praised Iran for its efforts to solve the Afghan problem. He expressed hope that relations between Kabul and Islamabad will improve gradually.

Mr. Borujerdi also met this evening with Mahmoud Mestiri, the UN special representative to Afghanistan. At the meeting the two sides declared their support for any effort that would lead to, or help bring about, peace in Afghanistan.

Mr. Borujerdi also met separately with Pir Seyyed Ahmad Gaylani and Sebghatollah Mojaddedi, the leaders respectively of Mahaz-e Melli [National Front] and the National Liberation Front of Afghanistan, and discussed the latest developments in that country.

Pakistan: Commentary Views Islamabad Talks on Afghanistan

BK0802164496 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1600 GMT 8 Feb 96

[Commentary by A.B.S. Jafri]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] To a rather barren past, the Afghan issue appears to be moving into the limelight once again. General 'Abdol Rashid Dostam, who reportedly holds sway over most of the north of Afghanistan, is in Pakistan on what has been described as an official visit. He is scheduled to meet Prime Minister Ms. Benazir Bhutto and also President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari. Gen. 'Abdol Rashid Dostam is believed to be holding the middle ground among various rival factions in Afghanistan at this stage of the conflict in that country.

While Gen. Dostam makes high-level contacts in Islamabad, Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister 'Ala'eddin Borujerdi has also flown into Pakistan after wide-ranging contacts and consultations with Afghan leaders. Another positive factor is seen in the fact that Islamabad's relations with Kabul appeared to be emerging in some sort of sunshine after the setback caused by the ransacking of Pakistan Embassy in Kabul. There are indications that the rulers in Kabul have realized there is need to restore Pakistan-Afghan relations to normalcy and amity.

During his stay in Pakistan, the Iranian [deputy] foreign minister, Mr. Borujerdi, will no doubt play a part in the overall effort to sort out the problems which continue to hinder progress toward restoration of peace and broad-based political agreement to end factional feuds in Afghanistan. Mr. Borujerdi has been in contact with almost all figures who matter in the Afghanistan context.

Pakistan and Iran continue their efforts separately as well as together to promote peace in Afghanistan. It is very encouraging indeed that the special envoy of the United Nations, Mr. Mahmoud Mestiri, is also around. He has been meeting various Afghan leaders. All these developments have a positive bearing on the Afghan situation, simply because they represent a new life in the Afghan negotiations.

For quite some time, it appeared that hardened positions of the various feuding factions were freezing, reducing chances of conciliation and peace based on consensus. Not that the main hurdles are likely to be put out of the way overnight, there is still an enormous amount of mistrust and misgivings among the various factions engaged in internecine conflicts. But these obstacles will be removed only through earnest negotiations in which friends of Afghanistan, like Pakistan and Iran, can play a vital and almost decisive part.

Pakistan, Iran, and the United Nations are working for a united Afghanistan under a government which is trusted by all Afghans and looked upon by all Afghans as their own government. Pakistan has stated over and over again that it never had any favorites in Afghanistan, that it has no favorites, and that it shall have no favorites. It believes it is for the Afghans to sort out their internal problems themselves. Pakistan seeks nothing but good of Afghanistan, because in Afghanistan's well-being lies the best interests of Pakistan. Pakistan's best national interests demand a united, peaceful and prosperous Afghani nation. In the 21st century, Afghanistan is to be the bridge between the Central Asian Republics and the outside world. Pakistan's vision of flourishing relations with the Central Asian nations presupposes a peaceful, prosperous, and brotherly Afghanistan. Pakistan and Afghanistan, quite as Afghanistan and Iran, are the closest of neighbors. The history of the three is so closely knit that it would be absolutely impossible to visualize peace and prosperity without these blessings being commonly shared.

Pakistan: Uzbek Official Criticizes India on Kashmir, Afghanistan

BK0902063996 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 9 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Uzbekistan fully supports the struggle of the Kashmiri people and has demanded a solution of the Kashmir issue through peaceful means

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in accordance with the UN resolutions. Uzbek Foreign Ministry adviser Gogayov [name as transliterated] said this during an interview with APP in Islamabad. He is in Pakistan on a goodwill visit. He said that India cannot keep Kashmiris under its yoke indefinitely and that Uzbekistan desires peace in this vital region. Therefore, the Kashmir issue should be settled in the light of the UN resolutions.

Referring to the Afghanistan situation, the Uzbek adviser said that some vested foreign powers do not want peace in Afghanistan. He said India is providing arms to the Afghan Government. He said that Pakistan must play a very important role in bringing peace to Afghanistan.

Pakistan: Cooperation Given in Sending Relief Goods to Afghanistan

BK0802140096 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pakistan is cooperating with the International Committee of Red Cross in carrying relief goods to Afghanistan. The Red Cross has been carrying the relief goods to Kabul from Peshawar for 16,000 affected families. They had planned three flights daily between Peshawar and Bargam but due to unfavorable weather, the flight operations have been affected. As such, the operation may continue for a longer period.

Pakistan: PML Supreme Council 'Inconclusive' Before Meeting

BK0802132496 Islamabad THE NATION in English 8 Feb 96 pp 1, 5

[Article by Shafiq Awan: "PML Supreme Council Urges Homework Before Going In for 'Final Kill'"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Lahore — A marathon session of the PML(N) [Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz)]-led Opposition's Supreme Council remained as inconclusive as had been the last week's joint meeting of Parliamentary groups of the all Opposition parties, taking no major policy decision except stressing the need for gearing up mass contact campaign and doing "sufficient" homework before going in for the kill against the government.

The meeting chaired by PML-N President Mian Nawaz Sharif at his Model Town residence deliberated on various proposals most of which were put off for the next meeting of the Supreme Council scheduled for February 29. It was also decided that the Supreme Council and the allied parties will meet after every 15 days.

Meanwhile, all the allied parties have been asked to hold their conventions at Central and Provincial levels by March 10.

The meeting also decided to form Action Committees at district level and in all national and provincial constituencies throughout the country to mobilize public opinion against the government. Considering that the period between Ramazan, Eid-ul-Fitar and Cricket World Cup is not suitable for any serious political activity therefore all the allies parties have been asked to use this period for organizing their cadres.

The Supreme Council also decided to set up a permanent secretariat of the Supreme Council at the Muslim League House Lahore and Provincial Councils Secretariat in all the four provinces. Each allied party will be given representations at Central and Provincial Secretariats as well as in the Action Committees.

Considereing the offer of cooperation from JUP [Jamiat-i-Ulema-i- Pakistan] (Noorani) the meeting also decided to welcome any political and religious party or group including Jamat Eslami's cooperation against the government and it was also decided to contact other parties to muster their support. However no decision was taken about MQM's [Muhajir Qaumi Moverment] cooperation.

Discussing the proposals about moving the no-confidence motions against the government at Central and Provincial levels and resigning from the Parliament and all the four assemblies en bloc, the Supreme Council decided to use these options in the final round as a secret weapon. The meeting observed that public pressure from outside the Parliament is necessary for any move against the government inside the Parliament and opposition will prefer to mobilise the people first for the "day of judgment". It was further decided to speed up the mass contact movement of the Opposition leader Nawaz Sharif and after his arrival from abroad it will be launched after Eid. For this purpose Nawaz Sharif will cut short his foreign visit and try to return home by February 13.

The meeting also decided to use all political and democratic options to get rid of the government and will exercise these options at an appropriate time. The Supreme Council also observed that the present situation is more favorable as compared to the one during Tehrik-e-Niajat to change the government adding the government itself paving way for its downfall through unwise policies and earning hatred of the people. The meeting also observed that apart from politicial parties the "non-political forces are impartial and have nothing to do with politics." Discussing Kashmir the Supreme Council observed that the weak policies of

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the government have complicated the issue further and provided a chance to India for aggression.

Later PML-N Spokesman Siddiqul Farooq in a press statement issued there on Wednesday stated that the Supreme Council meeting has unanimously decided to start a final struggle to pull the country out of the prevailing serious crisis and to make the year 1996 as the year of change.

He said the Opposition Leaders in the meeting discussed the political situation for more than four hours and expressed their respective concerns and declared that to get rid of the government is imperative.

Prominent among those who attended the meeting included Opposition leader in Senate Raja Zafarul Huq; president Awami National Party (ANP), Senator Aimal Khattak Ameer; Jamiat Ahle Hadis (JAH) Senator Sajid Mir; Senior Vice President Jamiat Ulema Pakistan (Niazi) (JUP-N) MPA [Member of Provincial Assembly] Sahibzada Fazal Karim; Central Joint Secretary of PML-N Ahsan Iqbal ANP's central leader, Senator Azam Hoti; Deputy Secretary General of JAH Mohammad Jamil and Secretary JUP-N, Punjab Engineer Salimullah.

Pakistan: Rangers Deny Altaf Hussain's House Forcibly Searched

BK0802161796 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Four terrorists were arrested after a police encounter in the Liaqatabad police station area in Karachi today. Some arms and ammunition were also recovered from the terrorists, who were wanted by the police in several incidents. Police say five or six terrorists escaped.

A press release by the Rangers rejected some press reports that the residence of Altaf Hussain [Muhajir Qaumi Movement, MQM, leader] in Karachi was forcibly searched yesterday. The press release also rejected allegations about the ransacking of Altaf Group's MPA [Members of Provincial Assembly] Hostel, including any embarrassment to members of the Altaf Group Coordination Committee. The statement says the MPA Hostel was searched on a tip about the presence of Naim Sharry [MQM activist] there. However, the manner in which the entire episode was highlighted in the press was totally uncalled for, aimed at creating undue sensation, and was an attempt to create hatred against the Rangers among the people.

Pakistan: Daily Interviews Interior Minister on Bombing

LD0902015396 Riyadh SPA in English 1944 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, Feb 8, SPA — Pakistani Interior Minister Nasrullah Babar has revealed that the two criminals who blew up the Egyptian embassy in Islamabad had died during the suicide bombing. In a statement to the Egyptian illustrated weekly magazine AL-MUSAWWAR to be published tomorrow, Babar said what remains to be found out in this case is the planners and financial backers of this crime.

He said an Egyptian-born Canadian national who works as regional director of a Canadian aid agency was arrested after a large number of forged passports was found in his house. He said the accused, whose first name is Khalid, still denies the charges despite the existence [of] strong evidence against him. He added that he had escaped to Afghanistan and security authorities have launched an effort to arrest him, because he is considered an important element in the case.

Pakistan: Opposition Leader Views Political Situation

BK0902085296 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 8 Feb 96 p 6

[Article by opposition leader Mohammad Nawaz Sharif: "Revival of Hope"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Events of the past few months have robbed the people of Pakistan of their most valued possession — hope. It is hope, the hope of a better tomorrow that sustains us through the adversities of today. Even vain hope serves a useful purpose of giving the wretched of the earth some relief to deal with their miserable present. If this last cherished possession of the dispossessed is lost, all will be lost.

The roots of the prevailing depth of despair, that has engulfed the nation, lie in the deceit, conspiracy and political high drama of 1993 compounded by the absurdity of the change it delivered. Incompetence, corrupt political practices and naked use of state power, that is the hallmark of the present government, has in the last two years pushed the public patience to the breaking point. In my view, we stand so close to the precipice that, unless remedial measures are initiated right now, the hurricane of popular fury can sweep away the whole system.

Three years ago, in the holy month of Ramadan, the country was deliberately ploughed into an artificial political crisis. The then opposition stooped to intrigue and conspired with the warlords and power brokers to bring

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down the government at all costs, an overwhelming majority in the Parliament and a Supreme Court decision notwithstanding. The unprincipled power play undermined the very pillars upon which a democracy stands, reducing the whole political edifice to rubble.

All this to what end? To satisfy the ambition for power of a few politicians with powerful backers, domestic and distant. "Why fear change?" it was argued; change is the life and blood of life itself. But a change for what? For a more secure existence? A more just society? More prosperity or a better place in the comity of nations?

Change is a nameless mother known only through its offspring! The change of 1993 in order to justify itself had to justify all, some or at least one of the above.

Is our existence more secure today? Over 2,500 persons have been killed in Karachi in the past year alone. There have been two insurrections in Malakand and bomb blasts in all major cities across the country. Crisis in Sui, kidnapping of OGDC [Oil and Gas Development Corporation] workers and sectarian killings and, above all, the loss of credibility of the law enforcement agencies leaves little room for hope and optimism. The state of anarchy that passes for a government here has relegated our dear country into the league of Somalia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Burundi.

Can there be a greater body-blow to hope and idealism in the country?

Are we a more just society? After seven years of relative calm when respect for human rights and constitution was gaining ground, the 1970s have been revived again, and with a vengeance. The rule of law, independence of judiciary and their impartiality has been completely destroyed by packing the superior judiciary with party loyalists. Law enforcement agencies have been reduced to a private arm of the ruling family, denuding it of credibility and authority. Extrajudicial killings of opponents has ushered in a new and disgusting wave of state terrorism.

Parliament is marginalised. Rulings of the Speaker are openly defied. All the state institutions have been eroded or destroyed to concentrate all state power in one pair of hands completely and absolutely. Human rights organizations, so vociferous during the last government, are conspicuous by their silence. How can we agitate for the rights of an individual when even the right to life is stifled by the state? How can a humble citizen even dream of getting his due rights when even the senior-most judge of the Supreme Court of Pakistan is subjected to intimidation and political pressure? In this moonless night of injustice, there are no stars even for guidance.

Are we more prosperous today? Once the rhetoric about macro-economic stability and the glitter of publicity about the MoUs [memorandums of understanding] has subsided, the truth lies bare for all to see. Half the industries are closed. Two devaluations plus heavy indirect taxation has pushed inflation to its highest since the last PPP [Pakistan People's Party] regime of the 1970s. Prices of essential items are 50-100 per cent higher. Electricity and gas prices have more than doubled. Foreign exchange reserves have declined and the value of the rupee has depreciated by 25 per cent since April 1993. The stock exchange, in a nose-dive for 14 months, has lost one-third of its value in 18 months. The only pride the Prime Minister can take is that "cheques are not being bounced" until the ink and paper to print notes runs out. The bottom line in any economy is reached when a man cannot feed his family after a full day's work. Sadly, we have reached that stage for most of the common citizens.

Do we have a better place in the comity of nations? "Defective" policies of the previous government and its "inadequate diplomatic skills" were said to have isolated the country. With a very eloquent prime minister, who is a master of diplomacy by self- proclamation, jet-setting around the world once every fortnight, the nation had a right to look forward to a better place under the sun. Three foreign policy initiatives on Kashmir boomeranged in our face. Our embassy in Kabul is a rubbel. So is our Afghan policy. Our differences with Iran on the Afghan crisis are mounting. Turkey and China, our trusted allies, are cool and indifferent. As the euphoria over the Brown Amendment dies down, we find our security facing unprecedented threats from India. Where is the slightest cause for cheer? Where is even a faint glimmer of hope?

This country cannot go on living without hope — no country can. What does the future hold for us? More or the same? Good English, designer clothes, fortnightly visits abroad, full page newspaper advertisements and false alarms about "Islamic Fundamentalism" are no substitute for the rule of law, good governance and strong state institutions. Helplessness, hopelessness and despair are the natural consequences of such a style of government. "Despair", as Nicolo Machiavelli wrote in 'The Prince', "is the most potent force for change." Deeper the despair, more unpleasant the change.

Helplessness and despair of the mid '70s led to the tragedy of 1977. This nation neither deserves, nor can it afford to be pushed through, the '70s all over again.

Faced with these dire straits the government's response exudes insincerity. The opposition has been invited more than once to negotiate on the restoration of

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women's seats in Parliament and repeal of the Eighth Constitutional Amendment. Are these the only problems faced by Pakistan today? Will the crisis in Karachi, breakdown of law and order and bomb blasts all across the country, the Stock Exchange crash, the nose-diving economy and our faltering foreign policy, in a nutshell the whole mess in which Pakistan finds itself today, will sort itself out if the opposition were to co- operate in making the Prime Minister more powerful than the President and restoring women's seats? Even at a crucial juncture like this, all that the Prime Minister can think about is how to consolidate her personal hold on power! Those who doubted us when we questioned the competence, integrity and the sincerity of this government owe themselves (and the country) an apology at the very least.

I have sent my formal answer to this invitation, but I do wish to emphasize that we are neither interested in providing the government with a photo opportunity and a temporary relief from public fury nor do we have any wish to involve or weaken the only state institution outside the personal fiefdom of Bhutto oligarchy. At the present critical time, my main concern is to save this nation the traumatic upheaval that usually follows such desperate hopelessness.

On express authority of my colleagues in the opposition and my Party, I offer our unreserved parliamentary and popular support to the government for:

— fair, just and lasting settlement of the Karachi crisis

— constitutional amendments which will, inter alia, restore the supremacy of Parliament vis-a-vis the executive and restore the independence, impartiality and neutrality of the judiciary;
— restoration of the credibility and neutrality of law enforcement agencies and the civil bureaucracy;
— reviving and restructuring the economy for bringing relief to the common people; and
— bringing some coherence into our policy regarding Kashmir, Afghanistan and foreign policy in general.

We are willing to give a bipartisan support in any number of areas in which the government chooses to make decisions through a cross-party consensus. Trimmings and trappings of power is not an issue at this hour of national crisis. At the same time we are no one's rubber stamps. We will have to be part of the decision-making process before we can support a decision.

If, on the other hand, the government only wishes to engage the opposition in a charade of negotiations, then we will have to say "No thank you — we have no desire to join in the orchestra of irrelevance while the country bleeds and burns." Then the Prime Minister will have to fiddle alone and, in due course, face the music alone.

At this crucial point in history may I ask PPP stalwarts a simple question: Does their loyalty to the Bhutto family take precedence over their loyalty to the country and the nation?

If the answer is "Yes" then Allah help us all. If, however, the answer is "No" then we may still have a chance to revive hope for a better tomorrow.

Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka: LTTE Dispatch Berates Police for Colombo Looting

BK0802140596 (Internet) Tamil Eelam News WWW in Tamil 6 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Security forces and police are accused of committing robberies after the bomb blast in Colombo. The accusation was made by the president of the Central Bank Employees Union. He asserts that taking advantage of the bomb blast, security forces and police entered the Central Bank building and took part in looting activities.

Meanwhile, a Colombo progovernment newspaper reports that a protection money collection racket by several Sri Lankan senior police officials and constables from lodging houses and business establishments in Colombo has been unearthed. The paper writes that during investigations, it has been revealed that a Muslim businessman, who permitted the vehicle allegedly used in the bomb blast to park on his property, has been paying protection money to Sri Lankan police personnel. Meanwhile, Sri Lankan troops are busy carrying out very strict search operations in Colombo and its suburbs. Consequently, Tamil people have been subjected to great difficulties. A correspondent from Colombo reports that about 500 Tamil youths and women have been taken into custody.

The Sri Lankan Navy arrested two Tamil youths from the high seas off the coast of Vidttaltivu in the Mannar district. The youths, V. Jesunesan and C. Batric, both 18 years old, were arrested by the Sri Lankan Navy and detained at Mannar military camp.

Sri Lankan troops told students who went to Vavuniya that they would not allow Jaffna university to function again. At Vavuniya detention camp, the troops told Tamil students: we have destroyed your educational institutions, so how are you going to continue your higher studies? The troops also said that they were not going to vacate Jaffna and as long as they would remain, they would not let Jaffna university function again. They further stated that the university had been damaged.

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The Sri Lankan Army has been adopting new measures to cause further problems for Tamils proceeding to Colombo from the north. The Army, which, hitherto, was permitting travelers arriving in Vavuniya to proceed to Colombo only after due authentication by their relatives or acquaintances from Colombo, has gone a step further now. The new regulation stipulates that those who proceed to Colombo should have somebody known to them at Vavuniya as well. Due to this new regulation, large numbers of travelers have been sent back north over the past two days.

A young woman from the north, who arrived in Vavuniya with members of her family on the way to Canada, was sent back. Asking her whether she was going to bomb President Chandrika Kumaratunga, the troops told her that if she would ever come again [to Vavuniya for on her onward journey to Canada], she must do so only after 1997. The woman also reported that the troops warned her that she would be arrested in case she makes another attempt to come [to Vavuniya] in defiance of their order.

Current accounts have been opened in all branches of Tamil Eelam banks. Since the process of opening current accounts has begun, a large number of traders, investors, and civilians have opened current accounts.

The thirst of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam [LTTE] is the motherland of Tamil Eelam.

Sri Lanka: 15 Tamil Rebels Killed in Batticaloa

BK0802140696 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Fifteen terrorists were killed and a large number injured in the firefight in the Batticaloa District yesterday. The incident occurred between Nawaladi and the 126th milepost along the Valaichchenai-Welikanda road.

According to the operational headquarters of the Defense Ministry, a large group of terrorists attacked the route picket party sent out from the 126th milepost detachment. Reinforcements were also rushed to the location. Troops together with the reinforcements retaliated effectively using small arms, mortars, and artillery fire. The firefight lasted for about 45 minutes.

The Defense Ministry says that the terrorists later fled the area carrying their casualties. One officer and 10 soldiers were killed in action. Four soldiers were wounded and have been evacuated to the Polonnaruwa General Hospital.

Sri Lanka: Envoys Urged To Take Action Against LTTE Fronts

BK0802140396 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sri Lanka has called upon envoys of a number of countries to take action against the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] and its front organizations. It has asked the envoys to initiate action against those organizations involved in activities supporting terrorism in Sri Lanka seeking to undermine the efforts of the government to find a solution to the Northeast problem through democratic means.

Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar invited the diplomatic representatives of the countries concerned to the Foreign Ministry yesterday. He briefed them with information concerning activities such as extortion, fund raising, trade in illicit arms, and abuse of information media carried out by the LTTE and its supporters.

According to a Foreign Ministry release, it was pointed out that the member states of the United Nations were obliged to cooperate in taking action against the perpetrators of terrorism in terms of international norms and legal obligations deriving from declarations. Many countries, including the European Union, have already expressed condemnation and deep concern over the escalation of terrorist acts, particularly those directed against innocent civilians by the LTTE. The envoys present thanked the minister for the briefing and they assured their government's cooperation consistent with their international obligation.

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